

**Security Council**

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**Australia, France, Luxembourg, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution**

*The Security Council,*

*Noting* with concern that the situation in the Middle East is tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force of 12 June 2013 (S/2013/345), and also reaffirming its resolution 1308 (2000) of 17 July 2000,

*Stressing* that both parties must abide by the terms of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and scrupulously observe the ceasefire,

*Concurring* with the Secretary-General's findings that the ongoing military activities conducted by any actor in the area of separation continue to have the potential to escalate tensions between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic, jeopardize the ceasefire between the two countries, and pose a risk to the local civilian population and United Nations personnel on the ground,

*Expressing* grave concern at all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement,

*Recalling* that there should be no military forces in the area of separation other than those of UNDOF,

*Calling* on all parties to the Syrian domestic conflict to cease military actions in the UNDOF area of operation,

*Strongly condemning* the incidents threatening the safety and security of United Nations personnel in recent months, including the detention of 21 UNDOF peacekeepers within the area of limitation on 6 March by armed elements of the Syrian opposition, the detention of four UNDOF peacekeepers within the area of limitation in the vicinity of Al Jamla on 7 May by armed elements of the Syrian opposition, and the detention of three UNTSO observers on 15 May by a group of anti-government armed elements,

*Strongly condemning* the recent intense fighting in the area of separation, including the attack which led to the injury of two UNDOF peacekeepers on 6 June,



*Underscoring* the need for UNDOF to have at its disposal all necessary means and resources to carry out its mandate safely and securely,

*Expressing* its profound appreciation to UNDOF's military and civilian personnel, including those from Observer Group Golan, for their service and continued contribution, in an increasingly challenging operating environment, and *underscoring* the important contribution UNDOF's continued presence makes to peace and security in the Middle East,

1. *Calls upon* the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973;

2. *Stresses* the obligation on both parties to scrupulously and fully respect the terms of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement, *calls on* the parties to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation, and *underscores* that there should be no military activity of any kind in the area of separation, including military operations by the Syrian Arab Armed Forces;

3. *Underlines* that there should be no military activity of the armed opposition groups in the area of separation, and *urges* Member States to convey strongly to the Syrian armed opposition groups in UNDOF's area of operation to halt all activities that endanger United Nations peacekeepers on the ground and to accord the United Nations personnel on the ground the freedom to carry out their mandate safely and securely;

4. *Calls on* all parties to cooperate fully with the operations of UNDOF, to respect its privileges and immunities and to ensure its freedom of movement, as well as the security of and unhindered and immediate access for the United Nations personnel carrying out their mandate, including considering the temporary use of an alternative port of entry and departure, as required, to ensure safe and secure troop rotation activities, in conformity with existing agreements, and *welcomes* prompt reporting by the Secretary-General to the Security Council and troop-contributing countries of any actions that impede UNDOF's ability to fulfil its mandate;

5. *Stresses* the need to enhance the safety and security of UNDOF, including Observer Group Golan, personnel, and *endorses* in this regard the Secretary-General's recommendation to consider further adjustments to the posture and operations of the Mission, as well as to implement additional mitigation measures to enhance the self-defence capabilities of UNDOF, including maximizing the Force strength and improving its self-defence equipment, within the parameters set forth in the Protocol to the Disengagement Agreement;

6. *Welcomes* the efforts being undertaken by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force to implement the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, requests the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and *urges* troop-contributing countries to take preventive and disciplinary action to ensure that such acts are properly investigated and punished in cases involving their personnel;

7. *Decides* to renew the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for a period of six months, that is, until 31 December 2013, and

*requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that UNDOF has the required capacity and resources to fulfil the mandate, as well as to enhance the Force's ability to do so in a safe and secure way;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973).

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**Thirty-second report of the Secretary-General on the  
United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire****I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2062 (2012) of 26 July 2012, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) until 31 July 2013 and requested that I provide, no later than 30 June 2013, a final report on the situation on the ground and the implementation of the resolution. The report covers major developments since my special report dated 28 March 2013 (S/2013/197) and outlines activities undertaken by the mission to implement its mandate under resolution 2062 (2012). It also outlines benchmarks to measure and track progress towards the achievement of long-term stability in Côte d'Ivoire and to prepare for transition planning.

**II. Political situation**

2. President Alassane Ouattara and his Government continued efforts to stabilize the security situation and accelerate economic recovery. In response to persistent security challenges along the border with Liberia, President Ouattara conducted an official visit to western Côte d'Ivoire from 1 to 4 May 2013. He convened a meeting of the Council of Ministers in Man on 2 May and visited Biankouma, Danané and Zouan-Hounien departments. During his visit, the President reassured the population that measures were under way to address long-standing land tenure and identity issues, which continued to fuel tensions, and that these matters would be brought before the National Assembly by the end of 2013. Previously, on 30 March, the Minister of Interior had visited Bloléquin, where some 3,000 persons had sought refuge after the cross-border attacks of 13 and 23 March, donating food and non-food items to the population. He also visited Duékoué on 5 April, handing over funds to representatives of affected communities to address some of their most urgent needs.

3. On 10 April, the National Assembly adopted legislation pursuant to article 75 of the Constitution, authorizing the President to govern by decree until the end of 2013 to execute his economic and social programme, particularly in relation to budgetary and fiscal matters. In a communiqué issued on 10 May, the former ruling party, the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), condemned the Assembly's decision as "illegal". On 25 April, my Special Representative concluded a framework agreement of cooperation between the United Nations and the National Assembly to strengthen



the Assembly's institutional capacity, including through the provision of technical expertise.

### **Regional and municipal elections**

4. The regional and municipal elections dominated political discussions in the run-up to the polls held on 21 April, in which FPI and other political opposition parties did not participate. In a communiqué issued on 15 April, FPI called on the party of former President Henri Konan Bédié, the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), to join the decision not to participate in the elections. On 18 April, FPI suspended 15 of its members for having registered as independent candidates.

5. Discussions between the Government and political opposition parties continued within the framework of the permanent forum for dialogue and through direct contacts with FPI, although formal discussions between the Government and FPI stalled in February. As outlined in my previous report, the Government and FPI in January agreed on the need to address a number of security challenges, although differences remained regarding the FPI request for a general amnesty and the reform of the Independent Electoral Commission. In spite of the FPI boycott of the local elections, the Government reaffirmed its willingness to continue discussions with FPI and other opposition political parties, which have yet to resume.

6. Several meetings of the permanent forum for dialogue took place in the run-up to the polls, including on the financing of political parties and the status of the opposition. Although the Government provided some financing to opposition parties for their campaigns, several still chose not to participate in the polls, arguing that conditions were not conducive to the conduct of free and fair elections. My Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of UNOCI, Bert Koenders, maintained close contact with key actors across the political spectrum to facilitate the Government's engagement with the opposition. The electoral campaign took place without any major incidents.

7. The municipal and regional elections took place in all 31 regions and 196 municipalities in a generally calm manner, with a turnout of 46 per cent for the regional and 37 per cent for the municipal elections. As a result of an incident, the elections could not be held in one municipality. On polling day, the Independent Electoral Commission successfully addressed technical difficulties in several electoral districts. Some 30,000 national security personnel were deployed across the country during the elections. Measures were taken by the Government to prevent the involvement of dozos (traditional hunters) in the security arrangements. Security incidents, including the destruction of ballot boxes and protests by supporters of candidates, were confined to a small number of locations and contained by the national security agencies, with limited support from UNOCI.

8. The results were announced by the Independent Electoral Commission between 22 and 29 April, with the Rassemblement des républicains (RDR) party winning in the majority of electoral districts followed by the Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire — Rassemblement démocratique africain. Independent candidates won some 72 municipalities and six regions, although many among them subsequently rejoined their political parties, mostly from the ruling coalition. Candidates filed 186 electoral complaints, of which the Supreme Court ruled 114 to be valid, annulling the results in two municipalities and one region, while revising the results in four municipalities with no impact on the respective results. Elections are to be rescheduled for the aforementioned municipalities and region.

### **National and international justice**

9. National and international prosecutions of alleged perpetrators of violations of crimes committed during the post-election crisis continued, although only perpetrators affiliated with the former regime have so far been brought to justice. On 4 April, the Government began the exhumation of victims of the crisis to collect evidence for judicial investigations and to facilitate the identification of victims and return the remains to their families.

10. In spite of these efforts, the resolve and capacity of the judiciary to impartially and equitably address major crimes remained uneven, with a number of cases stalled. These include the investigations into the killing of seven peacekeepers in Para in June 2012 and the attack on the Nahibly camp for internally displaced persons in Duékoué in July 2012. In its final report in 2012, the National Commission of Inquiry identified crimes committed during the crisis by both sides; of the 207 investigations opened since then, 204 relate to perpetrators affiliated with former President Laurent Gbagbo.

11. On 7 June, the interim Secretary of the FPI youth wing, Koua Justin, was arrested in Abidjan on the grounds of endangering State security.

12. On 3 June, Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court decided to adjourn the hearing on the confirmation of charges against former President Gbagbo, currently detained in The Hague, and requested the Prosecutor to consider providing further evidence with respect to the charges. On the same day, FPI called for the provisional release of former President Gbagbo in the light of the decision.

## **III. Security situation**

13. The overall security situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains fragile, in particular along the border with Liberia, although the security situation has continued to improve since the issuance of my previous report as a result of efforts made by the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia to address border security challenges. Recent incidents with cross-border dimensions occurred mainly in the context of unresolved land tenure issues and the lack of progress towards reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire.

14. Threats to peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire persist, and include: the continued existence of networks affiliated with the former regime, aimed at destabilizing the Government; the reported presence of mercenaries, former combatants and other armed elements along the border area with Liberia; the uncontrolled circulation of weapons; organized crime and illicit trafficking; and tensions between communities, often revolving around land tenure issues. There also appeared to be an emerging trend of incidents involving disgruntled former combatants, largely owing to the uneven pace of disarmament and reform of the security sector.

15. No large-scale attacks targeting national security forces and Government installations have been reported since my previous report. However, isolated incidents continued to occur. On 8 April, unidentified armed elements attacked and burned down a police station in Abidjan. On 18 May, five armed individuals attacked a post of the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI) in Agnafoutou, killing one FRCI soldier and two civilians. On 22 May, a group of 10 armed

individuals attacked both a police station and an FRCI camp in Abengourou, south-eastern Côte d'Ivoire, during which one assailant was killed and two others arrested. In addition, two people were killed and 30 civilians injured on 5 June during an armed attack on public transport vehicles on the road between Bangolo and Duékoué.

16. Several protests took place involving former combatants. On 9 and 11 April, some 100 former combatants, including several dozors, reportedly blocked the road in Zouan-Hounien. On 12 April, another group of former combatants blocked the main road in Bouaké in protest, rejecting the reinsertion and reintegration assistance offered by the Government and demanding direct cash benefits. The protests only subsided on 6 May after discussions with Government representatives. On 10 June, 300 former combatants placed barriers on the main road in Man. On 31 May, one person was killed in an exchange of fire between the gendarmerie and an armed group at Timbé village in northern Côte d'Ivoire. The group reportedly involved former combatants associated with FRCI, who claimed not to have been given a chance to benefit from the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

17. The continued illegal crossing of armed elements and weapons of the border area with Liberia remained a significant threat. On 23 March, armed elements crossing the border from Liberia attacked Petit Guiglo village, resulting in the killing of two civilians and the displacement of some 2,700 persons. Four of the assailants were killed by FRCI troops responding to the attack.

18. Reports continued to indicate that the planning and organization of further cross-border attacks might be under way with the support of Ivorians affiliated with the former regime living in Liberia and Liberian mercenaries, with funding from abroad.

19. Further to the cross-border attacks in March (see S/2013/197, para. 4, and para. 17 above), UNOCI enhanced its deployment along the border and increased the number of patrols, including in Grabo, Para, Tabou, Taï, Toulépleu, Zouan-Hounien and Danané, while intensifying its interaction with local authorities. UNOCI also provided logistical support to FRCI units in the area, while the United Nations country team enhanced its support to displaced persons and returnees.

20. Across the country, land tenure issues and control over natural resources remained a source of tension and violence between communities, in particular between native and non-native populations. The Government also began to clear protected areas in the west that had been illegally occupied. On 18 May, FRCI apprehended the militia chief, Amadé Ouérémi, and two of his affiliates in the Mont Peko national park and transferred them to Abidjan, where Mr. Ouérémi was charged on 30 May with illegal occupation and destruction of a protected area. Some 9,000 persons were displaced during this operation.

21. The number of clashes between communities and incidents involving FRCI elements remained particularly high in western Côte d'Ivoire, although they also occurred in other parts of the country.

22. Efforts continued to be made to enhance the protection of civilians, with a focus on the west. As outlined in my previous report, UNOCI has increased its civilian field presence and contacts with local authorities, which has helped to improve its capacity to collect relevant information, identify key protection

concerns and take necessary action in close coordination with the country team, including the protection of civilian working groups involving the humanitarian community.

23. Explosive remnants of war, as well as unsecured weapons and ammunition, remained a threat. UNOCI continued to assist the Government in refurbishing armouries and ammunition depots. Since January, the mission assisted in destroying 57,704 kg of unsafe and expired ammunition, as well as 842 stockpiled landmines and 68 cluster munitions, in compliance with relevant conventions. Capacity-building efforts continued with the training of national security personnel in stockpile management and explosive ordnance disposal.

#### IV. Regional aspects

24. In his capacity as Chair of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), President Ouattara remained actively involved in the subregion, particularly in Mali and Guinea-Bissau.

25. The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia continued their efforts to address common border challenges. On 5 April, the second quadripartite meeting bringing together the two Governments, as well as UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), was held in Monrovia. Participants condemned the recurrent sporadic attacks on the Ivorian side of the border and underscored the need for cooperation between the two countries, with the support of the United Nations.

26. The two Governments reiterated their commitment to working closely together to stabilize the border, and the decision of the Government of Liberia to reopen its borders was welcomed. They affirmed their commitment to enhance the presence of their respective security forces on both sides; to increase the exchange of intelligence; to undertake common action, including intensified coordinated land and joint river patrols; to take steps to strengthen the relationship between the respective security forces and populations, as well as steps towards the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; and to reinforce humanitarian coordination. At a technical follow-up meeting held in Grand Bassam on 3 and 4 June, it was agreed to establish a joint task force operations centre on both sides of the border, consisting of representatives of FRCI, the Armed Forces of Liberia and national law enforcement agencies.

27. On 30 April, during the twenty-second ordinary Summit of the Mano River Union, the Heads of State and Government welcomed the progress made by Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia to address cross-border security challenges. Efforts to support ECOWAS and the Mano River Union continued, particularly by the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), in developing a subregional strategy to address the threat of cross-border movements of armed groups and weapons, as well as illicit trafficking.

28. As outlined in my previous report, UNOCI continued to cooperate closely with UNMIL, including by exchanging information on cross-border trafficking of arms and ammunition and by regularly conducting coordinated border patrols and meetings which brought together Ivorian and Liberian authorities, as well as UNOCI and UNMIL personnel. UNOCI also continued to monitor embargo violations in support of the work of the Government and the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire.

29. UNOCI continued to enhance cooperation with the United Nations country team in Ghana, which included a visit by my Special Representative to Ghana, on 17 and 18 April, to discuss areas of cooperation.

## **V. Reform of security and rule of law institutions**

30. Although the national security sector reform strategy was endorsed by the Government in September 2012, there is still no agreement on its implementation. The secretariat of the National Security Council undertakes overall coordination of its implementation, while the consultative group acts as an advisory body. However, the majority of line ministries involved have yet to determine how they will implement the strategy. In addition, the lack of transparency among the various institutions, the differences of view and interest among key political stakeholders, the lack of confidence of the population in the security forces and mistrust within and among the security forces continued to hamper effective reform.

31. UNOCI continued to support the implementation of the strategy. It assisted the secretariat of the National Security Council in developing a communications strategy and a sensitization campaign targeting security forces, civil society and local authorities, while providing advice on methods to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategy. UNOCI seconded a liaison officer to the secretariat and facilitated training for representatives of the secretariat and FRCI, while developing a range of training programmes for the defence forces as well as measures to build confidence and increase cohesion within the security forces.

### **Justice and corrections**

32. Further progress has been made in implementing the 2012-2015 national justice reform strategy, with the adoption of a budgeted action plan by the Council of Ministers on 6 June. UNOCI, the European Union and bilateral partners continued to assist the national authorities in developing assistance and reform programmes, as well as refurbishing infrastructure and equipment. However, since January, five courts have been burgled and lost much of their equipment. The Cour d'assises, responsible for trying serious crimes, has not resumed operations since the crisis. Meanwhile, the newly created Commercial Court of Abidjan was officially inaugurated on 10 May.

33. A national strategic plan for the reform of juvenile justice is under development, following a countrywide assessment and a national workshop supported by UNOCI and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, a joint project involving UNOCI, the country team and the European Union continued to support six legal clinics, established in May, to provide legal advice to the population and improve access to justice.

34. As at 10 June, there were 9,272 detainees in prisons in Côte d'Ivoire. Prison security remains a challenge; some 68 detainees have escaped from nine prisons in 13 different breakouts since March. Detention conditions do not comply with international standards, in particular in regard to hygiene, access to medical treatment and nutrition. UNOCI continued to support the prison administration, including through the provision of equipment to reinforce security perimeters and the co-location of seconded corrections officers. UNOCI is also assisting national authorities in the design of a training programme for corrections personnel.

## VI. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

35. The start of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants in 2012 was an important milestone. As at 10 June, 5,973 former combatants, including 460 women, have been disarmed and demobilized, while 3,489 weapons, 28,355 rounds of ammunition and 2,448 items of explosive ammunition were collected, registered and/or destroyed, with United Nations support. Some 2,000 demobilized former combatants have been integrated into the prison administration and an additional 2,000, who were trained with UNOCI support, await integration into the customs service. Some 56 former combatants have been trained and provided with employment as private security guards. The Government, with the support of UNOCI, assisted 200 former combatants to become self-employed through, inter alia, the provision of a training programme in agriculture and pastoral activities and limited cash support. In addition, 253 former combatants who were already self-employed received a direct cash benefit equivalent to \$1,600. A project targeting over 1,000 former combatants will be launched in Bouaké and Guiglo to help them find employment as motorcycle taxi drivers.

36. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants remained a key priority of President Ouattara, who has requested his Government to expedite the disarmament and demobilization of 30,000 combatants by the end of 2013 and to complete the process by 2015. The Authority for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration subsequently proposed a two-year programme aimed at processing a caseload of approximately 65,000 former combatants, costing some \$145 million according to Government estimates. The Government is seeking funding for the programme within its annual budget and from donor support.

37. Disarmament and demobilization operations continued at the Anyama demobilization site near Abidjan, targeting mostly youth associated with FRCI living in camps. Operations also began in Bouaké and several other towns across the country, following the launching by the Government of new mobile mechanisms. The Government has opened field offices in the northern and western border areas and conducted sensitization and outreach activities. UNOCI and the country team provided support for these activities, as well as for civic education and HIV/AIDS activities. The United Nations Mine Action Service assisted in the registration, stockpiling and/or destruction of weapons and ammunition, while the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons continued to conduct sensitization campaigns across the country, with United Nations support.

38. The Government undertook efforts to reach out to former combatants affiliated with former President Gbagbo, including those located in Liberia, Ghana and Togo, encouraging them to return to Côte d'Ivoire. During a visit to Liberia on 23 May, reportedly to sensitize local refugees on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, an Ivorian delegation was detained for 24 hours for questioning by Liberian officials in Grand Gedeh county after entering the country without the formal authorization of the Government of Liberia. UNOCI is consulting the Government on how best to support the repatriation of Ivorian former combatants in other countries in the subregion, while developing community reinsertion projects in areas in which there is a high density of former combatants and vulnerable groups, including youth at risk.

39. Initial positive results notwithstanding, overall progress in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration has been halting and uneven. The national implementation strategy has yet to be finalized, and disarmament and demobilization operations therefore remain largely ad hoc in nature, often depending on negotiations between the Government and former commanders. A large number of former combatants remain unregistered, which has led to questions as to the credibility of the Government database. In order to address such concerns, the Authority for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and the Ministry of Defence initiated a joint verification mechanism, with UNOCI participation, to examine the eligibility of former combatants for inclusion in the programme.

40. Finding reinsertion and reintegration opportunities outside the public sector remained a major challenge. The Government's proposal to employ 6,500 former combatants in the public service raised expectations among those remaining. The Authority for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, supported by UNOCI and the country team, is developing a comprehensive reinsertion and reintegration plan to support the 30,000 former combatants expected to be disarmed and demobilized in 2013, including through: (a) employment in the public and private sectors; (b) fellowships which would enable them to return to school; (c) self-employment opportunities; and (d) training for former combatants who are poorly qualified. Furthermore, UNOCI and the country team have developed a joint initiative to generate youth employment, while consulting the private sector in regard to the development of a long-term reintegration strategy. In order to achieve sustainable results, the reinsertion and reintegration programme will require the strong engagement of the Government, as well as the alignment of such a plan with the National Development Plan and other relevant frameworks and close cooperation with the private sector.

## VII. Extension of State authority

41. Further progress was registered with the extension of State authority, although the effective functioning of public services remained hampered by damaged infrastructure, limited resources and equipment, and lack of technical and professional capacity.

42. Local authorities continued to play an important role in addressing tensions, as well as security and public order challenges, through, inter alia, departmental security committees chaired by the prefects. Sensitization and early warning committees have been instrumental in easing intercommunity tensions and violence. Local authorities undertook several initiatives, with the support of UNOCI, to promote a peaceful electoral environment through campaigns on democratic principles. UNOCI continued to provide support to the local authorities, including through the promotion of a participatory approach to conflict management and capacity-building activities.

43. While the National Observatory of Solidarity and Social Cohesion was reactivated in February 2013, fostering reconciliation and social cohesion at the local level remained a challenge for a number of reasons, including limited resources. A national programme for social cohesion was launched on 10 May to act as the coordinating body of all Government initiatives in this area.

44. The Government undertook efforts to enhance the capacity of the customs administration, including through the provision of vehicles and motorbikes. However, understaffing and a lack of logistical and infrastructure hampered effective surveillance and operations.

45. The Government, on 22 May, adopted draft laws to curb corruption and envisages the establishment of an anti-corruption commission. There were reports of the increased influence of political and economic networks affiliated with the former Forces nouvelles. The networks reportedly maintain control over some former combatants while continuing to pursue economic activities, profiting from contraband natural resources and a parallel taxation system.

### **VIII. Human rights and transitional justice**

46. The Government made further progress in upholding human rights. On 22 May, President Ouattara appointed 22 members of the National Commission on Human Rights, which was established in December 2012 to monitor the performance of Government institutions in protecting and promoting human rights. A draft law under review by the National Assembly will, once enacted, pave the way for the country's accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, both key instruments of human rights law.

47. The human rights situation in Côte d'Ivoire, however, remained of concern. UNOCI documented instances of summary execution, forced disappearance, arbitrary arrest, illegal detention, ill-treatment, torture, racketeering and extortion, including by FRCI elements and dozos. From January to June, at least 11 persons were killed, 20 were subjected to torture and ill-treatment, 4 were reported missing and 65 were arbitrarily arrested by FRCI or by dozos. Disciplinary measures were rarely taken against the alleged perpetrators and judicial proceedings have yet to be initiated. In general, only a small percentage of alleged perpetrators are prosecuted, which contributes to perpetuating perceptions of impunity. At the request of the FRCI command, UNOCI is supporting FRCI in addressing human rights violations and abuses by its elements, including through human rights training and capacity-building.

48. UNOCI continued to assess the cases and conditions of detention of civilian and military elements arrested in connection with the crisis. The Government took measures to improve the detention conditions of some detainees affiliated with the former regime, including access to medical care and the right to receive visitors. In early May, former President Gbagbo's wife, Simone Gbagbo, who had been indicted by the International Criminal Court, was temporarily transferred from Odienné, where she remains under house arrest, to Abidjan for medical treatment. In mid-April, her son, Michel Gbagbo, who is detained in Bouna, was also transferred to Abidjan for medical treatment. Detainees continued to state that their right to access to their lawyers was being denied, while other detainees remain secluded. UNOCI visited the former Young Patriots leader, Charles Blé Goudé, who was placed under preventive detention for crimes committed during the crisis; the visit took place before he was transferred to a secret location, reportedly for security reasons, under the responsibility of the Direction de la surveillance du territoire.

49. The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission made progress in the undertaking of national consultations through its 37 local branches across the country. The first phase of this exercise, which included surveys of the population's opinions on transitional justice, was concluded in February. The Commission has embarked on the second phase by engaging in dialogue with local communities.

#### **Sexual violence and child protection**

50. Sexual and gender-based violence remained of serious concern. Since January, 100 cases of rape, including 16 gang rapes, have been reported. Although some efforts have been made to bring the alleged perpetrators to justice, a low prosecution rate, the tendency to reclassify rape as indecent assault and the high cost of medical certificates confirming rape contributed to the prevailing impunity. The United Nations continued to provide support to the Government in finalizing a national strategy on combating sexual violence.

51. Harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage, remained of equal concern. Since January, 210 cases of female genital mutilation have been documented, and while for the first time four individuals have been convicted of excision, none has been taken into custody after trial.

52. The United Nations-led task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations committed against children in situations of armed conflict has documented 53 acts of rape and sexual violence against children, including 50 girls, since January. UNOCI also documented an incident involving three children from Burkina Faso, victims of trafficking, working in plantations in western Côte d'Ivoire. The task force has noted an increasing trend in early pregnancies of young girls subjected to sexual exploitation and abuse in schools. The Government is currently examining a national child protection policy, developed with the support of UNOCI and UNICEF.

#### **Media**

53. An assessment by UNOCI indicated that the overall use of hate speech in the media was decreasing, although freedom of expression, including on national television, has not always been guaranteed. UNOCI continued its activities to strengthen professional ethics and enhance responsibility in the coverage of political developments. Radio station ONUCI-FM continued to play an important role in providing objective information across the country.

## **IX. Economic situation**

54. Economic recovery has been strong and the macroeconomic performance in Côte d'Ivoire in 2012 was considerably better than expected, with a real gross domestic product growth of 9.8 per cent. Average annual inflation in 2012 was limited to 1.3 per cent. Macroeconomic prospects for the remainder of 2013 are positive, with a vigorous rate of growth and low inflation expected. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is currently estimating gross domestic product growth of 8 per cent for 2013.

55. On 7 June, IMF completed its third review of the economic performance of Côte d'Ivoire under the programme supported by the Extended Credit Facility, enabling the disbursement of an amount equivalent to \$74 million. This will bring total disbursements under the arrangement to \$395 million to date.

56. An IMF visit to Côte d'Ivoire from 13 to 27 March found that progress had been made in the implementation of structural reforms, especially in improving the business climate and strengthening the energy sector, and that the reform of the cocoa sector was contributing to the reduction of rural poverty. IMF noted, however, delays in preparing a medium-term wage bill strategy, restructuring the public sector, regularizing domestic debt and adopting a new electricity code. IMF expressed the view that the Government's reform programme should include value-added tax reform, further improvement in the business climate and the preparation of a competition law.

## **X. Humanitarian situation**

57. Since January, some 8,200 Ivorian refugees voluntarily returned to Côte d'Ivoire from Liberia, with United Nations support. Some 83,500 Ivorians remain refugees in the subregion, including some 66,400 in Liberia and 8,500 in Ghana. Cross-border attacks in March resulted in the temporary displacement of up to 8,000 persons, with 500 going to Liberia.

58. Overall, the humanitarian situation has improved significantly, although pockets of vulnerability persist. The humanitarian response focused on assisting returning refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as host families and communities, by providing short-term relief packages and through activities that support rebuilding of livelihoods and strengthening of resilience. Persisting conflicts over land, lack of employment opportunities and lack of access to basic social services and protection often hampered their sustainable reintegration in areas of return, especially in the west of the country. Pockets of structural malnutrition still persist, mainly in the north and north-east.

59. The country team is providing support to the Government to develop durable solutions for displaced persons, drawing upon the National Development Plan and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. A strategy for 2013 has been developed by the humanitarian community to address residual humanitarian needs while moving from the humanitarian coordination structure towards Government-led coordination. A number of coordination tasks and responsibilities have already been handed over to the Government, while the remainder will be handed over as soon as the relevant ministries have the requisite capacity.

## **XI. Safety and security of personnel**

60. Based on improvements in the security situation in Abidjan and Yamoussoukro, and following the removal of family restrictions by the Department of Safety and Security on 3 May, the International Civil Service Commission classified these locations as family duty stations. Crime remained the main threat in these cities, while in western Côte d'Ivoire the presence of armed elements, including former combatants, increased risks to United Nations personnel. Two United Nations staff members were victims of armed robbery in Abidjan during the reporting period. The United Nations has taken measures to mitigate the risk associated with these threats and to address the risk of terrorist attacks associated with the crisis in Mali.

## **XII. Deployment of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire**

### **Military component**

61. The strength of the military component as at 14 June was 8,725 military personnel, including 8,539 troops and staff officers and 186 military observers, against an authorized ceiling of 8,837 personnel. Further to the recommendation in my special report (S/2013/197), 850 troops were repatriated in May following the conclusion of the local elections, while preparations are under way to transfer the level two hospital in Abidjan to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). UNOCI refined plans for a further reduction of its military strength by 2015, while exploring with the Government, as recommended in my previous reports, the possibility of further reducing the protection arrangements that the mission provides to some members of the Government and key strategic installations.

62. UNOCI focused its efforts on the border area with Liberia, including the adoption of a more mobile posture with quick-reaction capability. It also took steps to increase cooperation with FRCI. A cooperative initiative between UNOCI and FRCI, signed on 30 May, is aimed at enhancing joint planning and activities; providing training in the areas of humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, child protection and sexual and gender-based violence; and exploring ways to provide further operational support, as appropriate. All support provided to FRCI will be in keeping with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy.

63. As indicated in my previous report, the Secretariat has begun to explore options for establishing a quick-reaction force within UNOCI to provide support, as needed, to UNMIL and to respond to other crises in the subregion, as required. Consideration is being given to the creation of a battalion battle group with the requisite functions, capabilities, equipment and resources to support potentially multiple deployments independently, and across a range of different operational theatres. This would be accomplished within the current authorized strength of UNOCI.

64. As mentioned in my previous report, I intend to deploy unarmed unmanned aerial systems to UNOCI, following an assessment of their deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Such a capability would enhance the mission's situational awareness and serve as a key technical enabler for UNOCI to provide the necessary surveillance in support of mission operations. This would be particularly important for monitoring and addressing cross-border security challenges, with particular attention to the cross-border movement of armed elements and weapons, protection of civilians and enhancement of the safety and security of mission personnel. The deployment will be done with full regard to the preceding experience in procuring and operating an unmanned aerial system in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

65. The strength of the French forces stands at 450 troops and is focused on supporting the Government in security sector reform. By its resolution 2062 (2012), the Security Council decided to extend until 31 July 2013 its authorization to the French forces to provide support to UNOCI, within the limits of their deployment and their capabilities. This support to UNOCI continues to be necessary.

### **Police component**

66. The strength of the police component as at 14 June was 1,498 personnel, comprising six formed police units with 998 personnel and 500 individual police officers, against an authorized ceiling of 1,555 personnel. Individual police officers are deployed across the country, while formed police units are deployed in Abidjan, Bouaké, Daloa, Guiglo and Yamoussoukro.

67. UNOCI continued to support the development of the national law enforcement agencies, inter alia, through joint patrolling and co-location at police stations across the country and the provision of assistance and advice regarding the collection of information on crimes, victims and suspects and the conduct of investigations in compliance with international standards. UNOCI also provided training programmes on topics such as human rights, public order, community policing, police ethics, maritime police, child protection and sexual and gender-based violence, close protection, road traffic policing, anti-racketeering, forensics, judiciary police, and information technology. Formed police units contributed to escorts of unarmed United Nations personnel and the protection of United Nations and governmental installations.

### **Civilian component**

68. A comprehensive review of civilian staffing requirements is planned for 2013/14.

## **XIII. Benchmarks**

69. Following the 2010 presidential elections and the ensuing crisis, the previous benchmarks for Côte d'Ivoire, which were based upon the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its supplementary agreements, were either implemented or overtaken by events. Therefore, the Security Council, in its resolution 2062 (2012), requested that I undertake an assessment of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and prepare benchmarks to measure and track progress towards the achievement of long-term stability in the country and to prepare for transition planning.

70. UNOCI consulted the Ivorian authorities, the country team and other key stakeholders in the development of the benchmarks, drawing upon objectives outlined in various national plans and strategies. The Government and UNOCI have proposed broad benchmarks and preliminary indicators in the areas of security and stability, political dialogue and reconciliation, and justice and human rights, all of which are prerequisites for the country's long-term stability. Such benchmarks and indicators would also help in measuring the progress of Côte d'Ivoire towards the restoration of sustainable peace, security, rule of law and stability, while serving as a reference that would allow UNOCI to continue its drawdown and prepare for an eventual transition. Benchmarks on humanitarian/socioeconomic development have not been included as the United Nations has taken into account the view of the Government that the economic growth rate of the country is sufficient to address crucial employment and economic development challenges while consolidating hard-won gains in the above-mentioned areas.

### **Security and stability**

71. A more stable security environment would need to be sustained throughout the country, including in sensitive border areas, by increasingly accountable and responsive defence and security institutions which adhere to democratic order and respect for human rights and which are prepared to respond to threats and ensure the security and protection of civilians. In order to achieve this objective, security threats in Côte d'Ivoire would need to be reduced to a level that can be addressed by national institutions. This benchmark could be measured by a continued decrease in acts of armed violence, the strengthening of effective cooperation by the Government with neighbouring countries and regional partners and the enhanced ability of the Government to secure the border areas, in conformity with subregional policy and cooperation agreements with its neighbours. Furthermore, former combatants, registered in a transparent and security database, should be disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated, and weapons collected and stored, in accordance with relevant ECOWAS protocols.

72. Defence and security sector institutions would need to be effective, professional and sufficiently resilient to guarantee security and stability for the State and to protect civilians. In order to achieve this benchmark, civilian and parliamentary mechanisms for the oversight of defence and security institutions would need to function well, while national authorities would be required to effectively and impartially implement their roles and responsibilities. The operational capacity of the armed forces would need to be commensurate with security needs and able to address remaining security threats, while the national police and gendarmerie should be capable of exercising full responsibility for law enforcement and public security across the country. A national strategy to combat gender-based violence would need to be adopted and implemented in order to reduce and address human rights violations and sexual violence, including acts perpetrated by elements of the security and defence forces.

### **Political dialogue and reconciliation**

73. A peaceful environment should be established through legitimate and effective governance and a competitive political system based on constructive and inclusive dialogue; this process would include peaceful elections and transitions of power in accordance with the Constitution, and addressing the root causes of the conflict in pursuance of peace consolidation and social cohesion. This objective could be achieved if political differences were resolved through inclusive dialogue, and fair, participatory and transparent elections were held in a peaceful environment. This would require political actors and institutions to exercise their respective roles in accordance with democratic and constitutional principles, with the National Assembly operating effectively and passing laws. Electoral reform, notably the reform of the Independent Electoral Commission and the list of voters, would need to be completed in a participatory manner prior to the next national elections.

74. National and community-based dialogue and reconciliation processes would continue to contribute to decreased conflict and tensions. Sources of conflict, such as land tenure disputes and intercommunity tensions, would need to be addressed in order to strengthen social cohesion. To this end, the Government would need to implement its decentralization policy, ensure a better distribution of economic growth, promote local development and expand basic social services to all people

across the country. Furthermore, the Government would need to implement a strategy to manage local conflicts over land in a manner that fosters national reconciliation and cohesion. Finally, meeting this benchmark could involve the implementation of the national strategy for durable solutions for internally displaced persons, returnees, former combatants and vulnerable persons.

#### **Justice and human rights**

75. National judicial institutions should provide effective, impartial and accessible justice and, together with specialized institutions, protect human rights. At the same time, judicial institutions would need to function in an effective, independent and impartial manner. This would require that justice institutions, including those of the military, be reinstated and have the resources to operate effectively, while the independence of judicial institutions and personnel be recognized and protected. Legal aid programmes would need to make judicial institutions increasingly accessible to people across the country. The penitentiary system would need to operate in accordance with international standards.

76. Institutions and mechanisms to protect human rights, such as the National Human Rights Commission, would need to operate in an effective, independent and impartial manner. The justice system would need to efficiently handle cases of human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence, while institutions for the regulation and protection of specific rights, such as freedom of speech, the press and communication, should be established and/or strengthened.

#### **Way forward**

77. The consolidation of the gains made and the achievement of long-term stability in Côte d'Ivoire will require simultaneous progress in all of the above-mentioned areas. Should the Security Council endorse these broad parameters, UNOCI and the country team would continue to work closely with the Government and key stakeholders in the further elaboration and implementation of the benchmarks, including detailed and practical indicators. I would include in future reports to the Council an evaluation of the progress achieved in these broad areas, while also using the benchmarks to guide the consolidation phase and UNOCI transition planning. I would, however, note that while the United Nations has a critical role to play and the continued support of partners will be essential, the achievement of these objectives rests first and foremost with the Ivorian authorities and people.

### **XIV. Financial aspects**

78. My proposed budget for the maintenance of UNOCI for the period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 in the amount of \$579.6 million has been submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration and approval. As at 10 June 2013, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNOCI amounted to \$43.6 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to \$1,236.4 million. Reimbursement to contributing Governments for troop and formed police costs, and for contingent-owned equipment costs, has been made for the period up to April 2013 and March 2013, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

## **XV. Observations**

79. Côte d'Ivoire continues to make progress and there is optimism that the current path will lead the country to regain its place as an anchor of stability and prosperity in the subregion. I am encouraged by the improvements in the security situation and the steady economic growth. I commend President Ouattara's leadership and his significant efforts in advancing key reforms in these and other areas essential for lasting peace, stability and development in Côte d'Ivoire. The improved situation in the country provides the necessary conditions for the Government to consolidate the progress made so far and to address the root causes of tension and conflict.

80. The successful holding of the regional and municipal elections demonstrated the ability of the national authorities, including the security forces, to assume responsibility for organizing and safeguarding the voting process. Also, by exercising their right to vote in a peaceful manner, the people of Côte d'Ivoire demonstrated their commitment to a democratic process. I commend the people of Côte d'Ivoire and their leaders for this accomplishment.

81. A strong and healthy democracy needs a vibrant opposition. I therefore regret the decision of the former ruling party and other political opposition parties to boycott the recent elections. I encourage all sides to actively participate in the political life of Côte d'Ivoire in order to build a better and more stable future for all Ivorians.

82. I am concerned over the continued political fragmentation of the country and would reiterate the need for all Ivorians to resolve political differences peacefully. I therefore urge the Government and the former ruling party to resume discussions, while continuing dialogue with other parties, to pave the way for the political reconciliation that will be essential as we move towards a new electoral cycle in 2015. The next presidential elections will be a litmus test for the country. Stakeholders across the political spectrum need to lay the groundwork now, including the necessary electoral reforms, to ensure that the next elections will be fair, inclusive and transparent, with results accepted by all. I call upon the Government and all political stakeholders to move forward quickly on these issues. The continuing good offices role of my Special Representative in facilitating these critical processes, including dialogue and reconciliation, will remain important.

83. I am encouraged by the Government's commitment to address the complex issues of land tenure and identity, which are essential to lasting peace and stability. I would urge the relevant Ivorian institutions to resolve these long-standing sources of tension and conflict. This will require a consultative and inclusive approach, time and dedicated resources.

84. In the meantime, I welcome national and local efforts to promote conflict prevention and resolution, and to foster social cohesion at the local level through the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, without which Côte d'Ivoire's hard-won gains could erode. I encourage the Government to ensure that efforts to promote reconciliation and healing continue after the expiration of the mandate of the Commission, and to coordinate the various efforts that are under way. I also encourage the Government to take additional measures to ensure that the fruits of its economic growth benefit the entire country, particularly the less developed, more conflict-prone areas, including through employment generation and expansion of basic services.

85. Although the overall security situation has improved, the situation in the area along the border with Liberia remains fragile and poses a threat to both Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, as well as the subregion. The continued sporadic occurrence of armed cross-border attacks, as well as reports indicating the planning, organization and financing of further attacks, are of serious concern. I commend the continued efforts by the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia at all levels to further strengthen their cooperation and joint activities to better address security challenges along their common border, including through established coordination mechanisms. Beyond security, more needs to be done to improve conditions for those who live in border areas and to promote durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced populations to return to their places of origin. The United Nations will continue to support the national authorities in their efforts in this regard.

86. I remain concerned about the human rights situation, including the incidences of sexual violence and rape. I urge the Government to increase and expedite its efforts to combat impunity by ensuring that those responsible for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are brought to justice, irrespective of their political affiliation, while respecting the rights of those in detention. Impartial justice is essential for reconciliation and to end decades of impunity for human rights violations. I urge partners to continue to support the Ivorian authorities in ensuring that justice is administered in an equitable manner, and that all alleged perpetrators identified in the report of the National Commission of Inquiry are held accountable. I also reiterate my call for urgent action to identify and hold responsible those involved in the killing of the seven peacekeepers in western Côte d'Ivoire in 2012, as well as the crimes committed against civilians in the Nahibly camp for internally displaced persons.

87. Security sector reform is essential to ensure lasting peace and security and protect the civilian population. It is first and foremost the responsibility of the Government to garner the necessary political will to move this critical process forward and to shift from the development of strategies and plans to concrete implementation and action. I would urge the relevant Ivorian institutions to move forward expeditiously in implementing the national security sector reform strategy, including by developing a transparent and sustainable vetting and recruitment mechanism for all security personnel.

88. The attention that President Ouattara and his Government have paid to finding lasting solutions for tens of thousands of former combatants is laudable and initial results are encouraging. Achieving the Government's ambitious goals of completing the programme by 2015 will require the sustained support of all partners, including UNOCI, in particular to find viable reintegration opportunities. This will require long-term commitment and funding, and I would urge the Government and bilateral partners to ensure the sustainability of this important initiative. I therefore strongly encourage the Government to produce a plan and budget for its programme, including a communications strategy. In addition, concrete measures will be needed to manage the expectations of former combatants and to mitigate the risks of interference in the process.

89. In spite of the remarkable progress that Côte d'Ivoire has achieved over the past two years, more needs to be done to ensure that the period of crises has been left behind, as reflected in the benchmarks presented in section XIII above which outlines the conditions for the country to achieve long-term stability. I encourage the

Government, with the support of UNOCI and other partners, to work towards the achievement of these ambitious objectives, which would also facilitate UNOCI transition planning. I call upon all partners of Côte d'Ivoire to remain actively engaged so as to consolidate gains and pave the way for sustainable recovery. We should not spare any effort to strengthen the still fragile progress and bring Côte d'Ivoire back to its place as a beacon of stability in West Africa.

90. The presence of UNOCI in Côte d'Ivoire remains essential, particularly with respect to its core priorities. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNOCI, as established in resolution 2062 (2012), at an overall authorized strength of 10,392 personnel, comprising 8,645 troops and staff officers, 192 military observers and 1,555 police, including 1,000 formed police unit personnel and 555 individual police officers, for a period of one year until 31 July 2014. I also reiterate my recommendation that UNOCI continue to reduce progressively its military strength by two battalions by mid-2015, based on the progress made towards achieving long-term stability in the country.

91. I would like to express my appreciation to Bert Koenders, who served as my Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire during an important period, for his leadership, and to welcome my new Special Representative, Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane. I would also like to thank all UNOCI military, police and civilian personnel, as well as the United Nations country team, for their commitment and dedication to furthering peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire. My appreciation also goes to the countries contributing troops and police to UNOCI, to donor countries, and to the regional and multilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations that have continued to provide invaluable support to Côte d'Ivoire.

## Annex

# United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire: military and police strength as at 14 June 2013

| Country                          | Military component |                |        |       | Police component    |        |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------|-------|---------------------|--------|
|                                  | Military observers | Staff officers | Troops | Total | Formed police units | Police |
| Argentina                        | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 2      |
| Bangladesh                       | 13                 | 9              | 2 161  | 2 183 | 359                 | —      |
| Benin                            | 8                  | 8              | 420    | 436   | —                   | 56     |
| Bolivia (Plurinational State of) | 3                  | —              | —      | 3     | —                   | —      |
| Brazil                           | 4                  | 3              | —      | 7     | —                   | —      |
| Burkina Faso                     | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 23     |
| Burundi                          | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 34     |
| Cameroon                         | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 23     |
| Canada                           | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 5      |
| Central African Republic         | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 8      |
| Chad                             | 4                  | 1              | —      | 5     | —                   | 20     |
| China                            | 4                  | —              | —      | 4     | —                   | —      |
| Djibouti                         | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 29     |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 14     |
| Ecuador                          | 2                  | —              | —      | 2     | —                   | —      |
| Egypt                            | —                  | 1              | 174    | 175   | —                   | 15     |
| El Salvador                      | 3                  | —              | —      | 3     | —                   | —      |
| Ethiopia                         | 2                  | —              | —      | 2     | —                   | —      |
| France                           | —                  | 6              | —      | 6     | —                   | 14     |
| Gambia                           | 3                  | —              | —      | 3     | —                   | —      |
| Ghana                            | 7                  | 7              | 500    | 514   | —                   | 7      |
| Guinea                           | 2                  | —              | —      | 2     | —                   | 10     |
| India                            | 8                  | —              | —      | 8     | —                   | —      |
| Ireland                          | 2                  | —              | —      | 2     | —                   | —      |
| Jordan                           | 7                  | 12             | 1 060  | 1 079 | 490                 | 20     |
| Madagascar                       | —                  | —              | —      | —     | —                   | 40     |
| Malawi                           | 3                  | 3              | 28     | 34    | —                   | —      |
| Morocco                          | —                  | 3              | 724    | 727   | —                   | —      |
| Namibia                          | 1                  | —              | —      | 1     | —                   | —      |
| Nepal                            | 2                  | 1              | —      | 3     | —                   | —      |

| Country                     | Military component |                |              |              | Police component    |            |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|------------|
|                             | Military observers | Staff officers | Troops       | Total        | Formed police units | Police     |
| Niger                       | 5                  | 5              | 931          | 941          | —                   | 60         |
| Nigeria                     | 4                  | —              | 63           | 67           | —                   | 4          |
| Pakistan                    | 11                 | 13             | 1 376        | 1 400        | 149                 | —          |
| Paraguay                    | 7                  | 2              | —            | 9            | —                   | —          |
| Peru                        | 3                  | —              | —            | 3            | —                   | —          |
| Philippines                 | 3                  | 3              | —            | 6            | —                   | —          |
| Poland                      | 2                  | —              | —            | 2            | —                   | —          |
| Republic of Korea           | 2                  | —              | —            | 2            | —                   | —          |
| Republic of Moldova         | 4                  | —              | —            | 4            | —                   | —          |
| Romania                     | 6                  | —              | —            | 6            | —                   | —          |
| Russian Federation          | 9                  | —              | —            | 9            | —                   | —          |
| Rwanda                      | —                  | —              | —            | —            | —                   | 16         |
| Senegal                     | 12                 | 7              | 488          | 507          | —                   | 23         |
| Serbia                      | 3                  | —              | —            | 3            | —                   | —          |
| Togo                        | 7                  | 6              | 517          | 530          | —                   | 18         |
| Tunisia                     | 7                  | 3              | —            | 10           | —                   | 20         |
| Turkey                      | —                  | —              | —            | —            | —                   | 12         |
| Uganda                      | 5                  | 2              | —            | 7            | —                   | —          |
| Ukraine                     | —                  | —              | —            | —            | —                   | 8          |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 2                  | 2              | —            | 4            | —                   | —          |
| Uruguay                     | 2                  | —              | —            | 2            | —                   | 4          |
| Yemen                       | 9                  | —              | —            | 9            | —                   | 15         |
| Zambia                      | 2                  | —              | —            | 2            | —                   | —          |
| Zimbabwe                    | 3                  | —              | —            | 3            | —                   | —          |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>186</b>         | <b>97</b>      | <b>8 442</b> | <b>8 725</b> | <b>998</b>          | <b>500</b> |



**Security Council**

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**Fourth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1956 (2010)****I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1956 (2010), in which the Council requested me to provide written reports on an ongoing basis to the Council every six months, with the first report due no later than 1 January 2012, about the United Nations Compensation Fund, evaluating the continued compliance with the provisions of paragraph 21 of Council resolution 1483 (2003). This fourth report covers the developments following the issuance of my third report (S/2012/933) on 14 December 2012.

**II. Developments**

2. In its authority over the arrangements for ensuring that payments are made to the Compensation Fund, the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission has continued to actively monitor deposits to the Fund. In addition, the secretariat of the Commission has continued to engage with the Iraq Committee of Financial Experts, the oversight body for the control, reporting and use of Iraqi oil revenues.

3. The secretariat of the Compensation Commission met with the Iraq Committee of Financial Experts in Geneva on 29 April 2013. During that meeting, the Head of the Committee reiterated the importance that the Government of Iraq attached to ensuring continued observance with the applicable United Nations resolutions and advised that the Committee did not have plans to alter the current mechanism for payment of 5 per cent of revenues from the sale of Iraqi petroleum and petroleum products into the Compensation Fund. He further advised that since approval of the mechanism for the valuation and transfer of the equivalent of 5 per cent of non-monetary payments of petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas made to service providers had been approved by the Ministry of Finance of Iraq, there had been regular transfers to the Fund. Since my second report to the Security Council, issued in June 2012, an additional amount of approximately \$162.9 million has been deposited to the Fund in relation to such transactions.

4. The Governing Council held its seventy-fifth session from 30 April to 2 May 2013. A delegation from the Iraq Committee of Financial Experts attended the opening plenary and the Head of the Committee again reaffirmed Iraq's commitment



to meeting its obligations. In its conclusion on the issue of arrangements for ensuring that payments are made to the Compensation Fund, the Governing Council expressed its satisfaction with the continued transfers to the Compensation Fund under the Committee's oversight.

5. The average monthly income to the Compensation Fund for the first five months of 2013 has been approximately \$374 million, with quarterly payments continuing to average in excess of \$1 billion. Since my last report to the Security Council, the Compensation Commission has made two payments to Kuwait totalling approximately \$2.4 billion; the first was made on 24 January 2013 and the second on 25 April 2013. The overall amount of compensation made available to date by the Commission is \$41.2 billion. Only one claim now remains, with an outstanding amount of approximately \$11.2 billion to be paid. This claim was submitted by the Government of Kuwait on behalf of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation. In 2000 the claim was awarded \$14.7 billion for oil production and sales losses as a result of damages to Kuwait's oil field assets and represents the largest award by the Governing Council. Based on current levels of income to the Fund and recent projections, the Commission remains on track to pay the outstanding balance in full by the spring of 2015.

6. The audit of the Development Fund for Iraq, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2012, is not yet available. However, based on current levels of income to the Compensation Fund and the Governing Council's satisfaction therewith, I am pleased to note that the Government of Iraq remains committed to complying with its obligations under paragraph 21 of resolution 1483 (2003).

7. I would like to conclude by expressing my ongoing appreciation to the Government of Iraq and the Iraq Committee of Financial Experts for their continued cooperation with the Compensation Commission.

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**Australia, France, Morocco, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution**

*The Security Council,*

*Recalling* its relevant resolutions on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, in particular resolutions 686 (1991), 687 (1991), 833 (1993), and 1284 (1999), and the reports of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 1284,

*Recognizing* that the situation that now exists in Iraq is significantly different from that which existed at the time of the adoption of resolution 661 (1990), and *further recognizing* the importance of Iraq achieving international standing equal to that which it held prior to the adoption of resolution 661 (1990),

*Welcoming* Iraq's continued demonstration of its commitment to the full implementation of its outstanding obligations under the relevant Chapter VII resolutions, namely the continuation of payment of the outstanding amount of compensation administered by the United Nations Compensation Commission, and both Iraq and Kuwait's efforts to advance regional stability, and *welcoming also* all the positive steps that have been taken by the Government of Iraq to fulfil resolution 833 (1993),

*Welcoming further* the ongoing cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait in the search for missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals within the framework of the Tripartite Commission and its Technical Subcommittee under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the positive efforts by the Government of Iraq regarding the return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains, and the return of Kuwaiti property,

*Reiterating* the need for continued efforts to locate and repatriate missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, through the Iraqi interministerial committee established for this purpose,

*Expressing* its deep appreciation to the late Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov and Ambassador Gennady Tarasov, who in the capacity of High-level Coordinator, devoted their time and professional skills to carrying out the mandate outlined in paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999) and ensuring that its implementation built trust between Iraq and Kuwait and contributed to the full normalization of their relations,



*Noting* that the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) includes advising, supporting, and assisting the Government of Iraq in facilitating regional dialogue,

*With consideration* to the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations on the pacific settlement of disputes,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General of 17 June 2013 (S/2013/357) and the letters from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait<sup>1</sup> and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq<sup>2</sup> to the Secretary-General;

2. *Calls upon* the Government of Iraq, in furtherance of its commitment to facilitate the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals referred to in paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991), to continue cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) by providing any information of such persons, facilitating the access of ICRC to all such persons wherever they might be and facilitating the search by ICRC for those Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains still unaccounted for, and to continue efforts to search for missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, through its interministerial committee;

3. *Decides*, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, to terminate the measures in paragraphs 2 (c), 2 (d) and 3 (c) of resolution 686 (1991), paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991) and the arrangements set forth in paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999), and reaffirmed in subsequent relevant resolutions;

4. *Requests* that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) promote, support and facilitate efforts regarding the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains, and the return of Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, seized by Iraq, *further requests* the Secretary-General to report separately to the Security Council on these matters in his reports on the progress made towards the fulfilment of all UNAMI's responsibilities, and *also requests* that the Secretary-General consider designating the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General at UNAMI covering political affairs with the responsibility for overseeing these issues and ensuring appropriate resources for this purpose;

5. *Expresses* its intention to review the modalities of the reporting referred to in operative paragraph 4 of this resolution, upon the eventual termination of UNAMI's mandate, with a view towards considering a continued role for the United Nations in such matters if needed;

6. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

<sup>1</sup> S/2013/323, annex and S/2013/324, annex.

<sup>2</sup> S/2013/357, annexes II and II.

**Annex to the letter dated 21 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

**Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation (March 2013)**

**Introduction**

Under the presidency of the Russian Federation, the Security Council carried out an extensive programme of work during the month of March 2013. The Council held 34 meetings and closed consultations. The Council adopted six resolutions and agreed on eight statements to the press.

**Africa**

**Democratic Republic of the Congo**

On 5 March, the Council heard an open briefing by the Secretary-General, who presented his special report on the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region (S/2013/119). The Secretary-General informed the Council of his efforts, which had resulted in the signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region by 11 leaders of regional countries on 24 February in Addis Ababa. The Secretary-General stressed that that document provided an innovative comprehensive approach to the worrisome situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which envisaged a combination of actions at the national, regional and international levels and a set of recommendations on the support by the international community for the implementation of the Framework. Among them were the decision to appoint a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and the proposal to enhance the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) by deploying an intervention brigade carrying out a peace-enforcement function.

The Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo expressed the gratitude of his Government for the personal involvement of the Secretary-General in the process of preparation and signing of the Framework and called on the Security Council to authorize the deployment of the intervention brigade as a matter of urgency against the deteriorating situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and his team, which resulted in the signing of the Framework, aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflict. They stressed the importance of its strict implementation by all the signatories. One member stated that the Framework should not replace ongoing regional peace initiatives but should rather build on what had been achieved and give momentum to the whole process.

Members of the Council generally supported the recommendations to enforce the mandate of MONUSCO to enable it to better implement its tasks on protection of civilians. Several members of the Council expressed concerns about the possible deployment of the proposed intervention brigade recommended by the Secretary-

General in his special report after consultation with the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), given the possible implications of having United Nations peacekeepers take on a peace enforcement role and the possible impact on United Nations peacekeeping principles in general. Others supported the possible deployment of the intervention brigade as a means to end the cycle of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, provided appropriate measures were taken to mitigate risks to civilians and all United Nations personnel.

On 6 March, the Council held a private meeting with the troop- and police-contributing countries to MONUSCO. Following briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and the Military Adviser, Lieutenant General Babakar Gaye, there was an exchange of views on technical details for the future deployment of the intervention brigade.

On 22 March, the Council issued a statement to the press, welcoming the surrender of Bosco Ntaganda to the International Criminal Court in The Hague and paying tribute to all victims of serious crimes of international concern in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the statement, the members of the Council expressed their appreciation to the Governments of Rwanda, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, as well as to the International Criminal Court, for facilitating the surrender of Mr. Ntaganda to the Court. The members indicated that they viewed Mr. Ntaganda's surrender to the International Criminal Court as a positive step for international criminal justice as well as towards the restoration of peace and security in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The members recalled that those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, as well as for violence against children and acts of sexual and gender-based violence, must be held accountable. They also recalled that the Commander of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), Sylvestre Mudacumura, was still at large in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On 28 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2098 (2013) setting out a new, comprehensive approach aimed at addressing the root causes of instability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region through, inter alia, the formation, on an exceptional basis and without creating a precedent or any prejudice to the agreed principles of peacekeeping, of an intervention brigade within MONUSCO to address the problem of armed groups. Several members of the Council took the floor. While some members commended the decision to form such an intervention brigade recommended by the Secretary-General in his special report after consultation with the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and SADC, some others voiced concern about the possible impact on United Nations peacekeeping principles. It was stressed that the brigade should focus on the negative forces that were still active in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, one Council member adding that the brigade should bolster the peace process in the region, including the Kampala talks. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and la Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Raymond Tshibanda N'tungamulongo, expressed gratitude for the Council's authorization of the intervention brigade, as requested by his Government, and other United Nations efforts to help to protect his country's territorial integrity and foster peace and stability over the past 15 years.

### **Guinea-Bissau**

On 6 March, in consultations of the whole, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, introduced the report of the Secretary-General, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2048 (2012), on the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau (S/2013/123), and underlined limited progress in that regard. National stakeholders remained divided and the military continued to interfere in politics, while international partners remained unable to elaborate a common assessment of the situation and the challenges on the ground. It was confirmed that the consolidated report of the African Union, Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, Economic Community of West African States, European Union and United Nations joint assessment mission to Guinea-Bissau that was designed to reach such common understanding was still being finalized. The Assistant Secretary-General expressed satisfaction over the announcement by the International Monetary Fund of the resumption of its activities in the country.

The members of the Council took note of the decision by the Heads of the States members of the Economic Community of West African States to extend the transition period in Guinea-Bissau and their call to its Transitional President to propose to the country's National Assembly a revised draft transition road map for the preparation and conduct of free, fair and transparent general elections before the end of 2013. The necessity and urgency for such elections were also stressed.

### **Somalia**

On 6 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2093 (2013), by which it extended until 28 February 2014 the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the United Nations logistical support package for AMISOM. In the resolution, the Council endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to replace the United Nations Political Office for Somalia with a new expanded special political mission, and decided that the new mission should integrate the United Nations country team under the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Council decided that the Director of the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) would report to the Special Representative in respect of UNSOA services to the new special political mission, but would retain an independent reporting relationship to the Department of Field Support in New York in respect of its primary task of supporting AMISOM. The Council also partially lifted for a period of 12 months the arms embargo imposed on that country, in particular on specific supplies intended solely for the development of the security forces of the Federal Government of Somalia and to provide security for the Somali people. The Council also agreed with the Secretary-General that the conditions in Somalia were not yet appropriate for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, but requested that he keep that under review, including through the setting of benchmarks for when it might be appropriate to deploy a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

### **Somalia/Eritrea sanctions**

On 12 March, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Kim Sook, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, briefed the Council, in consultations of the whole, on the Committee's work over the past

120-day period, with a focus on its informal consultations of 15 February and the findings and recommendations of the midterm briefing of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.

The members of the Council recognized that the security situation in Somalia remained volatile and that strict adherence to the sanctions regimes, including arms and charcoal embargos and individual sanctions, was key to the promotion of the Somali peace process. While most members commended the partial suspension of the arms embargo provided for in resolution 2093 (2013) as aiming at strengthening Somalia's security sector, some other members of the Council expressed the opinion that the move was premature, given the risks of arms proliferation.

Members of the Council took note of the Monitoring Group's information on its improving relations with the Government of Eritrea. Some members called upon Asmara to abide by its obligations to meet the Group in Eritrea as soon as possible.

#### **Sudan/South Sudan**

On 12 March, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, briefed the Council in consultations of the whole. The former described as a "very positive development" the adoption, by the Joint Political and Security Mechanism on 8 March, of the decisions on the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. He also expressed hope that the adoption on 12 March of the Implementation Matrix on the Agreements of 27 September 2012 would move their implementation forward. At the same time, he stressed that two outstanding issues had a strong bearing on relations between the Sudan and South Sudan — the ongoing conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and the delayed implementation of the interim arrangements for and progress in settling the final status of Abyei. The Special Envoy emphasized that the start of direct talks without preconditions between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) was crucial for reaching a cessation of hostilities that would allow humanitarian access and create a conducive atmosphere to find a political solution to the conflict in the two areas.

The Under-Secretary-General briefed the Council on the security situation on the ground. He characterized the decisions of 8 March of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism as a crucial step in building confidence between the Sudan and South Sudan, and outlined the steps taken by and expected from the two countries and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) to effectively proceed with the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and the activation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism along the agreed timelines.

The members of the Council called for full and timely implementation of the arrangements of 8 and 12 March and all the agreements of 27 September 2012, including the withdrawal by the parties of all forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the resumption of oil production. They stressed the need for launching direct political negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-N, agreeing on cessation of hostilities and addressing the humanitarian situation in the two areas.

Some members of the Council expressed scepticism regarding the parties' readiness to implement the latest agreements, referring to their previous record of non-compliance with the arrangements reached, and stressed the need for the Council to apply pressure to ensure the fulfilment of resolution 2046 (2012). Other members underlined the importance for the Council to be balanced and unbiased in relation to both parties, and to encourage their further constructive engagement in order for them to reach mutually acceptable solutions to outstanding issues.

On 27 March, during an informal interactive dialogue with the Council, the Chair of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, Thabo Mbeki, commended the recent progress in implementation of the agreements of September 2012 and March 2013 between the Sudan and South Sudan, in particular on border security. He expressed hope for an early resumption of negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-N with a view to reaching a political solution to the crisis in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and addressing the humanitarian situation in the two areas. He expressed his belief that both the Sudan and SPLM-N wanted a lasting cessation of hostilities, and optimism that the African Union Panel could help to build sufficient trust between the two sides to enable that to be agreed. He also stressed the need for the implementation of the temporary arrangements and the stabilization of the situation in the Abyei Area. The Chair of the African Union Panel emphasized an imperative of continued negotiations between the Sudan and South Sudan on the final status of the Area, whose progress was dependent upon further improvement in bilateral relations. He called on the Council to respond positively to the request of the Sudan, South Sudan and UNISFA regarding the establishment of a protection force for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. He also stressed the need to support the joint outreach by Juba and Khartoum to seek financial assistance to both countries and to encourage the alleviation of the Sudan's external debt. The Chair of the Panel urged the lifting of economic sanctions against the Sudan, calling them counterproductive and devoid of any rationale. He warned against possible attempts by "spoilers" to disrupt the Sudan/South Sudan peace process. He reported the desire of SPLM-N to participate in discussions about the activities of the Joint Mechanism.

Members of the Council welcomed the progress in materializing the agreements between Khartoum and Juba, particularly on border security and the resumption of oil production, and emphasized the importance of their implementation. They noted the parties' efforts in searching for sustainable solutions to key outstanding issues, including establishment of the temporary institutions of the Abyei Area and determination of its final status, and reiterated their support for the mediation of the African Union Panel and the Special Envoy. The Council looked forward to an early launch of negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-N. Some members stressed the need for an immediate cessation of external support to the rebels and called on them to give up the agenda of bringing down the Government in Khartoum by force. They also called for mobilization of financial assistance to both countries, alleviation of the external debt of the Sudan and lifting of economic sanctions on the latter. Other members emphasized the urgency of addressing the grave humanitarian situation in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, deplored the aerial bombardments in the two areas, and called for the Sudan to extend full cooperation with the United Nations to enable immediate emergency humanitarian relief to the affected populations.

## Sierra Leone

On 13 March, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, presented, in an open briefing, the tenth report of the Secretary-General on the mission's activities (S/2013/118). He stressed that, notwithstanding the progress that the country had made over the past decade, challenges still remained, particularly in tackling the root causes of the conflict. The political divide and polarization along regional ethnic lines needed to be addressed. Sierra Leone's national institutions, including the justice and security sectors, had to be strengthened in order for them to effectively discharge their respective responsibilities. Poverty and youth unemployment remained serious challenges. The priorities articulated in the Government's Agenda for Prosperity aimed to achieve those and other key objectives. While the Government took the lead, international assistance remained essential. The Executive Representative concluded that it was appropriate to begin a phasing out of UNIPSIL responsibilities to the United Nations country team, and he stressed the importance of other international partners' support for the continued development of Sierra Leone, in the light of the drawdown of UNIPSIL.

The Permanent Representative of Canada, Guillermo Rishchynski, in his capacity as Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, highlighted the priority areas for the configuration in the near term in order to support the transition process, including advocating for necessary resources to fill possible gaps created by the drawdown of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone.

The Council also heard the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, Samura M. W. Kamara, who assured the Council of his Government's readiness, willingness and interest in cooperating with the Security Council towards ensuring a smooth and seamless transition from UNIPSIL to a resident coordinator system that would eventually mark a successful outcome of the UNIPSIL mission and, in general, United Nations intervention in peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Sierra Leone.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council commended the progress achieved by Sierra Leone and agreed that UNIPSIL had fulfilled its mandate and should transition over the next 12 months to the United Nations country team.

On 26 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2097 (2013), by which it extended the mandate of UNIPSIL for one year, until 31 March 2014, and decided that the Mission should be fully drawn down by that date. The Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone expressed appreciation for the Council's continued support to his country's efforts.

## Libya

On 14 March, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Tarek Mitri, briefed the Council on recent developments in Libya. He commended President Mohamed El-Magariaf and Prime Minister Ali Zeidan for efforts to defuse tensions and provide efficient security measures during the anniversary of the Libyan revolution.

which did not destabilize the country. The Special Representative said that the United Nations had urged caution on the adoption of a political isolation law. He was pleased to note the Government's measures to accelerate the screening of detainees and their transfer to State-controlled detention facilities. He said that, despite the fact that the Libyan people had come a long way "since the liberation of the country 17 months ago", security problems remained formidable and were arguably the predominant concern for most Libyans. He noted that the country remained awash in unsecured weapons and munitions that continued to pose a regional security risk, given Libya's porous borders. Significant progress in improving the country's precarious security situation remained hampered by weak State institutions and security coordination mechanisms. In that regard, he noted that safeguarding Libya's democratic transition would require an inclusive dialogue leading to genuine national reconciliation. Notwithstanding those difficulties, the Government had resolved to move forward to enhance security and address the proliferation of weapons and presence of armed groups, and UNSMIL would continue to provide assistance in that regard. The Special Representative added that, given the legacy bequeathed to the Libyan people by the former regime, the process of democratic transition would surely face an array of obstacles requiring long-term responses.

The Council adopted resolution 2095 (2013), by which it extended the mandate of UNSMIL for another 12 months and that of the Panel of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), and made adjustments to supplies of non-lethal military equipment intended solely for humanitarian or protective use, and related technical assistance or training. The Prime Minister of Libya and the Permanent Representative of Rwanda, Eugène-Richard Gasana, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, addressed the Council.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council expressed their support for the activities of UNSMIL and highlighted its important role in stabilizing the situation in Libya, supporting the democratic transition and overcoming serious challenges the country was facing. Some members of the Council recognized Libya's progress in moving forward with a transition. Some others raised particular concerns over the security situation in the country, especially in its eastern part and along the southern borders, the proliferation of arms, mistreatment of detainees and continued detentions without due process. The need for a process of national reconciliation, transitional justice and an inclusive national dialogue in the country was stressed. The importance of strict implementation of the sanctions regime was also highlighted.

## **Mali**

On 18 March, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, briefed the Council, in consultations of the whole, on the humanitarian situation in Mali. She noted that the humanitarian situation in Mali was partly a consequence of the ongoing vulnerability in the country as well as of the political upheaval, significant violence and conflict following the coup in March 2012 and subsequent fighting between Tuareg and violent radical groups. More than 447,000 Malians had been displaced since January 2012, placing a huge strain on host communities in central and southern Mali and neighbouring States. She referred to reports of an increase in the number of

returnees after the beginning of the French and Malian military operation, but underlined that hundreds of thousands of people were likely to remain displaced for the foreseeable future. She highlighted the fact that the 2013 Humanitarian Appeal was only 15 per cent funded. The members of the Council expressed concern over the serious humanitarian crisis and supported the work of humanitarian agencies in Mali. It was stressed that, in order to find a comprehensive solution to the crisis in Mali, the underlying issues which had caused it should be addressed.

On 27 March, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, briefed the Council, in consultations of the whole, on major political and security developments in Mali and highlighted the key observations and recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189), including two options for a possible United Nations engagement in the country. It was stressed that, in the interplay between political and security priorities, it was of critical importance to ensure that the security imperative did not detract from the imperative for political progress in Mali. The Assistant Secretary-General said that the extent to which the United Nations could or should assume responsibility for security and stabilization in the light of the French military efforts was a key question before the Council. Members of the Council underlined the importance of national reconciliation and dialogue in Mali. There was a preliminary exchange of views on the options for a possible United Nations engagement in Mali.

#### **Central African Republic**

On 20 March, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), Margaret Vogt, informed the Council of new attacks and the renewed seizures of towns by rebels from the "Seleka" coalition. She said that on 17 March the insurgents had issued an ultimatum with a number of conditions, threatening to march towards Bangui if those were not met within a 72-hour deadline. She expressed serious concern at the worsening humanitarian situation, including the looming food crisis, and also cited reports of gross human rights violations and abuses in Government- and "Seleka"-controlled areas. She stressed that all parties to the Libreville Peace Agreements of 11 January 2013 should show their commitment to the latter through concrete actions.

The members of the Council expressed strong concern at the rapid deterioration of the political, security, humanitarian and human rights situation in the Central African Republic, reiterated their support for the Libreville Peace Process under the auspices of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and called upon the Government and "Seleka" to abide in good faith by their commitments. They urged the conflicting parties to immediately cease hostilities and seek political settlement through negotiations.

Following the discussion, the Council issued a statement to the press in which it condemned the recent "Seleka" attacks, stressed the need for all parties to the Libreville Agreements to fully implement their commitments, commended the efforts by ECCAS supported by the African Union to resolve the crisis, called on all parties to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and to safeguard humanitarian property, and called on the "Seleka" leadership and the Government of

the Central African Republic to ensure that their forces respected human rights and international humanitarian law.

On 22 March, in consultations of the whole, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs informed the Council that after the expiration of the 72-hour deadline the "Seleka" rebels had resumed their advance towards Bangui and faced no resistance from the Government army or ECCAS regional peacekeeping forces (MICOPAX). Government and MICOPAX troops had occupied strategic positions in preparation for a possible attack on the capital.

The members of the Council called upon the conflicting parties to fully implement their obligations pursuant to the Libreville Agreements, immediately cease hostilities and resolve the crisis through negotiations. They commended the support to the peace process by ECCAS, the United Nations, the African Union and other partners and reiterated their concern over the dire humanitarian and human rights situation in the Central African Republic.

On 22 March, the Council issued a statement to the press expressing strong concern at the advances of armed groups towards Bangui and the ensuing humanitarian consequences, recalling the press statement of 20 March, in particular the need for all parties to the Libreville Agreements to fully implement their commitments, calling on them to refrain from acts of violence against civilians and to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access, and recalling the need to hold accountable those responsible for violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law.

On 25 March, following the consultations of the whole on Liberia, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs informed the Council that "Seleka" rebels had entered Bangui and on 24 March had captured the presidential palace. Thirteen members of the South African training contingent had died during the takeover of the capital. President François Bozizé had reportedly fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Cameroon. "Seleka" leader Michel Djotodjia had proclaimed himself the new President of the Central African Republic and declared the validity of the Libreville Agreements and the retention of the transitional Prime Minister, Nicolas Tiangaye, as head of the Government of National Unity. Some reports indicated possible splits within the "Seleka" coalition. There was widespread looting of property in Bangui, including that of some United Nations staff residences, as the rebels entered the city. Most of the international staff and their dependants would be evacuated, with 40 critical United Nations personnel remaining in the Central African Republic. The Assistant Secretary-General stated that further deterioration of the security situation seriously hampered humanitarian efforts in Bangui.

The members of the Council condemned the seizure of power by force by the "Seleka" and the ensuing violence and looting. They expressed heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of South Africa on the deaths of and injuries to South African soldiers. They reaffirmed their continued support to the Libreville Agreements as the viable basis of a peaceful solution to the political and military crisis in the Central African Republic.

On 25 March, the Council issued a statement to the press in which it called for the restoration of the rule of law, constitutional order and the implementation of the Libreville Agreements as the framework for political transition, reaffirmed the

important role played in that process by ECCAS with the African Union's support, noted the decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council to suspend the participation of the Central African Republic in all the activities of the African Union and the latter's decision against the "Seleka" leaders, called on all parties to refrain from any acts of violence against civilians, including foreign communities, to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and to fully respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and re-emphasized the need to hold accountable those responsible for violations and abuses.

### South Sudan

On 21 March, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Hilde Johnson, in an open briefing to the Council, noted that the country continued to face multiple challenges, while progress had been achieved in some areas. The situation in the country continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region. She expressed concern at the proliferation of weapons, activities of armed groups, political fault lines, intercommunal violence and land disputes in several areas that posed grave threats to the civilian population. The humanitarian situation in South Sudan remained challenging, and humanitarian actors reported impediments to their work. Also worrying were the increased reports of threats to freedom of expression and respect for human rights in South Sudan as well as impunity and lack of accountability within the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The operating environment for the United Nations had become more challenging owing to a number of grave violations of the status-of-forces agreement. The most egregious of those occurred on 21 December 2012, when SPLA forces shot down an UNMISS helicopter, killing four Russian crew members. The Special Representative stressed that the United Nations had urged a swift and transparent investigation by the Government and would shortly publish the results of its own internal enquiry. She briefed the Council on security sector reform as well as progress towards establishing national institutions. The Legislative Assembly, she noted, had begun to carry out more active oversight, including audit and budgeting functions. UNMISS had also introduced additional flight security measures.

The Under-Secretary of South Sudan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Charles Manyang D'Awol, acknowledged that South Sudan still faced many challenges. The country continued to build its national institutions, despite numerous internal and external challenges. He stressed that an inclusive national reconciliation process was sorely needed, and significant investment by other parties and continued support by UNMISS were required, to help the 18-month-old State to project its authority and develop capacity to govern volatile areas.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council expressed concern over the increasing tensions and violence within South Sudan and noted the effects of North-South tensions on South Sudan. They underlined the need for the South Sudan authorities to remove all impediments to humanitarian activities. The primary responsibility of the Government for protection of civilians was emphasized. The members of the Council expressed concern at the deteriorating human rights situation in the country. Condolences were reiterated to the Government and people of the Russian Federation on the shooting down of the UNMISS helicopter with Russian crew members. The Council called for conducting

a swift and thorough investigation, bringing to account those responsible and taking measures to avoid such tragic incidents in the future. The Government of South Sudan was urged to fully cooperate in the implementation of the UNMISS mandate. In that regard, some members of the Council expressed concern at the increased security incidents involving Mission personnel, including the wounding on 12 March of an UNMISS peacekeeper. Some members also expressed concern regarding the refusal by the Government to rescind its decision of October 2012 to expel an UNMISS human rights officer. The Council underlined the importance of further improvement of relations between the Sudan and South Sudan for stabilizing the internal situation in the latter.

### **Liberia**

On 25 March, the Council heard, in an open briefing, a presentation by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Karin Landgren, of the twenty-fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Mission (S/2013/124). She underlined the need to proceed with the phased drawdown of UNMIL while moving swiftly to address the remaining social inequality, political infighting, and other historic and current fissures that had led to decades of war and still ran deep. In order to achieve lasting peace, fairness and the inclusion of all Liberians were required. One positive step in that direction was a conference held by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to launch the National Vision 2030 as a long-term political and economic goal to bring about a fair political system, security, rule of law and national reconciliation. Another positive achievement was the launch of Liberia's First Justice and Security Hub on 12 February in Gbarnga with the support of the Peacebuilding Fund. Nevertheless, corruption and tensions between branches of the Government remained at the forefront of political life as well as the atmosphere of mutual distrust among Liberia's primary political actors.

Ambassador Staffan Tillander of Sweden, in his capacity as Chair of the Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, informed the Council of the results of his recent visit to Liberia, which allowed him to consult the Government on the ways to accelerate progress on security sector reform, rule of law and national reconciliation and to finalize the second review of the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council expressed their satisfaction with the fact that the security situation in Liberia remained stable. They welcomed the launch of a national programme to achieve social cohesion and socioeconomic development as well as the ongoing dialogue on issues related to constitutional reform, decentralization and national reconciliation, which should lay a foundation for sustainable peace and the country's long-term stability. The members of the Council commended the Government of Liberia for the progress in improving the criminal justice system and ensuring the rule of law and described the launch of Liberia's First Justice and Security Hub, allowing for increased access for the population to justice and security services, as a positive step towards the consolidation of peace. The members of the Council encouraged the Government to pay greater attention to preventing impunity for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence, especially against minors. They also stressed that land issues remained a potential source of recurrent conflict in Liberia and encouraged the

Government to establish functional dispute resolution mechanisms to address specific land disputes.

## **Asia**

### **Middle East (United Nations Disengagement Observer Force)**

On 6 March, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations informed the Council of the detention earlier that day of 21 peacekeepers of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) within the area of limitation by armed elements of the Syrian opposition, who identified themselves as the Martyrs of Yarmouk Brigade. Following the meeting, the Council issued a statement to the press, in which the members of the Council strongly condemned the detention of the UNDOF peacekeepers and demanded their unconditional and immediate release. The members called upon all parties to cooperate with UNDOF in good faith and reaffirmed their unconditional support for UNDOF.

On 8 March, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council, in consultations of the whole, on the efforts made to guarantee the safe release of the detained peacekeepers. He noted that various interventions of the United Nations and other supportive interlocutors had helped in reaching some progress. The armed group promised UNDOF that its detained military personnel could be released in a few hours. At the same time, the Syrian armed forces agreed to cease fire to allow the peacekeepers safely to leave Jamla, the village where they were kept. In order to reduce the threat to UNDOF personnel, the mission had started reconfiguration of its operations to ensure the fulfilment of its mandate in a safe and secure manner.

On 26 March, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council, in consultations of the whole, on the Secretary-General's report on UNDOF (S/2013/174). He said that the United Nations appreciated the Council's support to UNDOF, and noted that the situation in the UNDOF area of operations was increasingly volatile because of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. He stressed the risks of the situation to the security of the personnel of UNDOF and of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, which made it difficult for UNDOF to carry out its tasks freely and had led to the decisions by Japan and Croatia to withdraw their contingents. Owing to safety and security risks, the United Nations continued to stress to the Syrian authorities the need to facilitate the entry of UNDOF personnel through the Bravo gate, including for the troop rotation scheduled for May.

The members of the Council expressed their support for the measures taken (reducing patrols, reinforcing positions, providing armoured vehicles and personal protection kits) to mitigate risks for the United Nations personnel while ensuring the fulfilment of mandated tasks. They also expressed support for exploring alternative ways to ensure secure rotations and supply lines. The members of the Council agreed that any military activity in the area of separation conducted by any actor posed a risk to the long-held ceasefire, the local civilian population and United Nations personnel. Some members emphasized the urgency of a political solution to the Syrian crisis as well as the necessity for a comprehensive settlement of all aspects of the Middle East problem. The members of the Council welcomed the practice of convening informal meetings, within the framework of resolution 1353

(2001), with the UNDOF troop-contributing countries, such as the one held on 22 March.

On 27 March, the members of the Council issued a statement to the press, in which they expressed grave concern at all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. In that regard, the members expressed grave concern at the presence of the Syrian Arab Republic armed forces inside the area of separation. Furthermore, the members expressed grave concern at the presence of armed members of the opposition in the area of separation. The members of the Council expressed their deep concern at the risk that all military activities in the area of separation conducted by any actor posed to the long-held ceasefire and the local population. They called on all parties, including armed elements of the Syrian opposition, to respect the freedom of movement of UNDOF and the safety and security of its personnel, while recalling that the primary responsibility for safety and security on the Bravo side rested with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. To that end, the members of the Council called on all parties to ensure safe and secure rotation activities of UNDOF, including through considering the temporary use of an alternative port of entry and departure as required.

#### **Middle East (Lebanon)**

On 14 March, the Special Coordinator of the Secretary-General for Lebanon, Derek Plumbly, and the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Izumi Nakamitsu, briefed the Council, in consultations of the whole, on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). They stated that the situation along the Blue Line and in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained calm, which was a significant achievement, but expressed grave concern at the violations of Lebanon's sovereignty by Israeli aircraft. They also noted the worrying increase in tension in Lebanon itself, as well as the negative impact of the Syrian crisis on stability in Lebanon, including cross-border shelling from the Syrian Arab Republic. The Special Coordinator praised the Government of Lebanon for keeping its borders open to refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and urged the international community to provide additional assistance to Lebanon in this regard.

The exchange of views by the members of the Council was reflected in a statement to the press issued after the meeting. They underscored their grave concern over repeated incidents of cross-border fire, which caused death and injury among the Lebanese population, as well as incursions, abductions and arms trafficking across the Lebanese-Syrian border, and other border violations. The members of the Council underlined the importance of full respect for Lebanon's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity and the authority of the Lebanese State, in accordance with Security Council resolutions. Deep concern was expressed at the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon's stability. Members of the Council stressed the need for all Lebanese parties to respect Lebanon's policy of disassociation, consistent with its commitment in the Baabda Declaration. The members commended Lebanon's generous efforts in hosting and assisting refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and called upon the international community to follow through on humanitarian aid pledges made during the Kuwait Conference of 30 January 2013.

On 25 March, during his open briefing to the Council, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Robert Serry, emphasized that Lebanon's stability required that all parties respect Lebanon's policy of disassociation, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration, and remain united behind the President, Michel Sleiman. He referred to the Council's press statement of 14 March, which underlined that it was important for Lebanon's continued stability that all parties make swift progress to ensure that parliamentary elections take place on a consensual basis within the legal and constitutional framework. He recalled that the press statement clearly recognized the fragility of the situation in Lebanon, expressing deep concern at the impact of the Syrian crisis on the country's stability, and mentioned reports of incidents involving shelling of the Lebanese territory from the Syrian Arab Republic.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council confirmed their commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, as well as the authority of the Lebanese State, underlined the need for all parties to uphold Lebanon's policy of disassociation, and expressed support for the leadership of President Sleiman in forming a new government.

#### **Afghanistan**

On 19 March during the debate, the Secretary-General presented his report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2013/133) and expressed the view that Afghanistan's political climate was dominated by the 2014 elections, and that broad participation and credible process were essential for reaching the goal of a widely accepted leadership transition. He also stressed that the United Nations was reflecting on its future role in Afghanistan and preparing for challenges ahead and should continue providing good offices, including support for the upcoming elections. The Secretary-General added that the United Nations should also maintain its work for reconciliation and regional cooperation, stand for human rights and advance development in order to reinforce Afghanistan's own efforts in those areas and strengthen Afghan political processes and institutions. He expressed his particular concern over the spike in poppy cultivation, as shown in the opium risk assessment, and the considerable increase in civilian casualties, especially among women and girls, in 2012. The Secretary-General underlined that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in fulfilling its mandate, had to maintain its ability to reach out across the country and to meet the many demands it faced during that crucial period. While the budget of UNAMA for 2013 reflected significant reductions, he did not envisage additional reductions for 2014.

The Permanent Representative of Afghanistan said that, for the Afghan people, national sovereignty meant taking full responsibility for their destiny. He reiterated the commitment of the Government of Afghanistan to fair, democratic and transparent elections. The members of the Council, as well as non-Council member States taking part in the debate, reconfirmed their unequivocal commitment to the peaceful transition process in the country. They underlined, in particular, that transparent and credible elections in Afghanistan in 2014 should contribute to national reconciliation. The members of the Council stressed that all the parties involved in the reconciliation process should renounce violence, have no links to international terrorist organizations, including Al-Qaida, and respect the Afghan

Constitution, including its human rights provisions, notably the rights of women, and be willing to join in building a peaceful Afghanistan. In the lead-up to Afghanistan after 2014 and the assumption by the Afghan authorities of complete responsibility for the security situation in the country, members of the Council expressed concern over the number of victims of the internal conflict, especially among women and children. Neighbouring and all interested countries were called upon to play a constructive role in Afghanistan. Drug and precursor trafficking and related transnational crime were characterized as being among the major problems undermining Afghanistan's way forward. It was acknowledged also that the United Nations, especially through UNAMA, must play a role in preparations for Afghanistan's milestone of 2014 and beyond.

The Council adopted resolution 2096 (2013), by which it extended the mandate of UNAMA for another year, until 19 March 2014.

### **Iraq**

On 21 March, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Martin Kobler, briefed the Council on the situation concerning Iraq. He highlighted the challenges facing the country, including volatility on the streets with demonstrations in Iraq's western provinces continuing since December 2012 and strained relations between the central Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Concern was expressed about the decision to postpone provincial council elections in Ninewa and Anbar Provinces. He drew attention to the efforts of UNAMI to advance political dialogue and national reconciliation through its good offices, and mentioned the progress achieved towards the normalization of relations between Iraq and Kuwait. The Permanent Representative of Iraq also addressed the Council.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council expressed their support for the role played by UNAMI, welcomed the steps taken by Iraq and Kuwait towards normalization of their relations and stressed the importance of Iraq's fulfilment of its remaining obligations under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It was pointed out that security remained a major concern, with political instability exacerbating the socioeconomic situation.

### **Middle East**

On 25 March, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Robert Serry, briefed the Council in an open briefing on the situation in the Middle East. He expressed cautious optimism regarding recent developments on the Israeli-Palestinian track, including in the light of the visit of the President of the United States, Barack Obama, to the region and his meetings with the leaders of both sides, and commitments reiterated by them to the two-State solution despite their difference on its terms and the way forward. He also underlined the Israeli-Turkish agreement on restoring normal relations and noted no new settlements announcements, fewer incursions by the Israeli security forces into the West Bank and a decrease in the demolitions of Palestinian structures. He noted, however, that the level of settler violence remained high and expressed concern at a serious setback in the implementation of the Gaza ceasefire, with new rockets fired into Israel and restrictions renewed on fishing

limits and movement of Palestinians into and out of Gaza, as well as repeated closure of the Kerem Shalom crossing.

Nevertheless, the Special Coordinator suggested that the new opening could be developed into a serious and substantial political initiative leading to meaningful negotiations, and called on the parties to demonstrate political will and determination to make progress and on the international community to act in concert through a revitalized Quartet that engages more broadly with Arab partners, and regional and other stakeholders.

In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council shared the Special Coordinator's cautious optimism, stressed the necessity of launching the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue without delay, and expressed hope for renewed United States engagement in reaching a positive outcome. They warned against unilateral measures by the parties, particularly with regard to Israeli settlement activities, and condemned the recent rocket fire from Gaza into Israel. Some members stressed the need for the financial sustainability of the Palestinian Authority. In this regard, many welcomed the decision by the Government of Israel to transfer Palestinian tax revenues in a timely manner and without disruption.

#### **Middle East (Syrian Arab Republic)**

In his briefing on 25 March, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General touched upon the continued worsening of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic by stressing that limited signals by the parties towards the possible start of a dialogue had so far not materialized. He pointed out the tragic humanitarian consequences of the conflict and noted the Secretary-General's decision to conduct an investigation into the alleged use of chemical weapons in the country. He said that the Secretary-General believed that all allegations should be taken seriously. During the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Council called for a speedy political solution to the Syrian conflict. They supported the efforts of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, and reconfirmed their support for a negotiated solution to the conflict based on the Geneva Communiqué. Some members of the Council praised the decision to grant the seat of the Syrian Arab Republic in the Arab League to the National Coalition of Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, while others criticized the move as counterproductive. Some members of the Council expressed concern over reports of the use of chemical weapons in Khan al-Asal and called for an immediate independent United Nations investigation of the case with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice. Some other members of the Council said that any and all credible allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic should be pursued, and in this regard mentioned other reports of the use of chemical weapons in Homs and Damascus that the Secretary-General's team also needed to investigate immediately with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice.

## Europe

### Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

On 22 March, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Farid Zarif, informed the Council that, since his last briefing in November 2012, there had been some important positive developments thanks to the direct Belgrade-Pristina engagement in the high-level political dialogue facilitated by the European Union. He said that the political dialogue was at a critical stage and encouraged the Council to take stock of the achievements made so far and to support both sides in their endeavours to reach agreements, especially regarding difficult issues specific to the situation in northern Kosovo. He reported that significant challenges on the ground remained and cited adverse security incidents, frequent instances of inflammatory rhetoric, and posturing from various quarters, as well as increased tension in northern Kosovo and the wave of vandalism against Orthodox sites and the destruction of a Second World War monument. He expressed gratification with the Kosovo police's timely and unambiguous statement on the acts of vandalism and further appropriate and welcome actions that had been taken by the Kosovo authorities, including the allocation of public funds for the repair and reconstruction of the graves and monuments. He indicated that representatives of the international community had unanimously condemned such wanton acts and, together with UNMIK staff, had been instrumental in encouraging more proactive public responses from local and central political authorities. The Special Representative also mentioned that too many serious crimes in northern Kosovo, as well as those affecting communities in the rest of Kosovo, continued to go unresolved and remained a matter of very sober concern. He underlined that the ending of budget allocations to the UNMIK administrative office in Mitrovica had undermined the most functional channel available to address problems in the north through consensus. He concluded by saying that for the vital political talks to achieve their maximum potential there was a need for strenuous, constant and coherent work on the ground both by the mandated international presences and by local leaders.

The Council also heard the Prime Minister of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and Hashim Thaçi of Kosovo, who confirmed their commitment to the political dialogue facilitated by the European Union.

The members of the Council welcomed the progress made in seven rounds of the dialogue and expressed their support for it. They expressed deep concern regarding the fragile security situation following a wave of vandalism that had taken place across Kosovo in mid-January, during which around 200 gravestones in several Serbian Orthodox cemeteries had been damaged and destroyed. Some members of the Council stated that those incidents had happened in reaction to the removal by the Government of Serbia of a monument in southern Serbia. Some members were also troubled by the destruction of a Second World War memorial and the lack of progress in returns of internally displaced persons. The members of the Council reaffirmed their support for investigating incidents of organ trafficking in Kosovo. They called on UNMIK to continue to fulfil its mandate in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

## **Latin America**

### **Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**

On 6 March, the members of the Council observed a minute of silence in remembrance of the late President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías.

### **Haiti**

On 20 March, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and interim Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Nigel Fisher, presented the Secretary-General's report on the Mission's activities (S/2013/139). He stressed that the holding of credible elections in the country in 2013 was fundamental to reinforce Haiti's democratic institutions and respond to the urgent needs of the population such as employment and social development. In order to meet these and many other challenges Haiti was facing, the Mission had devised a consolidation plan which provided key objectives over the next three years, in particular to strengthen security, rule of law, elections administration and institutional modernization. Specifically, the plan set out four core tasks: development of the Haitian National Police, the strengthening of a permanent electoral commission once it was created, strengthened rule of law and respect for human rights, and supporting key national and local governance reforms. It also foresaw the reduction of the Mission's uniformed strength.

In the debate that followed, the members of the Council underlined the importance of the creation of the Electoral Council so that free and fair legislative, municipal and local elections could be held as soon as possible. Among other priorities, they mentioned the strengthening of the Haitian National Police and national justice institutions. They also confirmed that lasting stability in Haiti depends on improved socioeconomic conditions.

Broad support for the ongoing efforts to eliminate the cholera epidemic was also voiced. The members of the Council generally welcomed the consolidation plan and underlined that it needed further consideration; they acknowledged that the relatively stable security situation would likely allow MINUSTAH to implement a drawdown without undermining stability.

## **Thematic and general issues**

### **Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

On 5 March, during consultations of the whole, the delegation of the United States of America introduced a draft resolution (S/2013/136) following the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 February.

On 7 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2094 (2013), in which it condemned in the strongest terms the third nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 February, reaffirmed the Council's decision that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes as well as ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and further strengthened sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In the resolution, the Council

also affirmed that it would keep the country's actions under continuous review and expressed its determination to take further significant measures in the event of a further launch or nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

#### **Non-proliferation/Islamic Republic of Iran**

On 6 March, the members of the Council held a public meeting to hear an open briefing by the Permanent Representative of Australia, Gary Francis Quinlan, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), on the work of the Committee from 5 December 2012 to 4 March 2013. He informed the Council that the Committee had held one meeting, during which, among other issues, some incident reports were discussed, and that the Committee had adopted two implementation assistance notices (on conventional arms and related materiel and on financial and business measures), designated two entities (Yas Air and SAD Import Export Company), updated the lists of nuclear-related and ballistic missile-related items and conducted additional work using the no-objection procedure. During the reporting period, the Committee received a number of communications relating to the implementation of the relevant Security Council measures.

The members of the Council commended the efforts of the Committee in carrying out its mandate and renewed their firm support for the work of that body. Some members expressed concerns regarding the continued non-compliance by the Islamic Republic of Iran with resolutions of the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency and its both clear and possible violations of sanctions. Other members stressed that conclusions regarding any violations should be based on reliable evidence. The members of the Council reiterated their support for negotiations in the framework of the five plus one group and underlined the need for seeking a comprehensive and long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations.

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**Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of  
Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)**

**Reporting period from 1 March to 28 June 2013**

**I. Introduction**

1. The present report provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) since my last report of 27 February 2013 (S/2013/120).

2. In a press statement issued on 14 March, the members of the Security Council welcomed the prevailing stability across the Blue Line and in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and stressed the necessity for all parties to ensure that the freedom of movement of UNIFIL is fully respected and unimpeded. They underscored their concern over repeated incidents of cross-border fire and at the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon's stability. Members of the Council stressed the need for all parties to respect Lebanon's policy of disassociation and to refrain from any involvement in the Syrian crisis, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration, and in this regard welcomed President Michel Sleiman's efforts to preserve Lebanon's unity and stability. They also acknowledged the important role played by the Lebanese security and armed forces in sustaining national unity and sovereignty and welcomed steps to further develop their capacities. Members of the Council expressed their grave concern at the impact of the growing flow of refugees fleeing violence in the Syrian Arab Republic and commended Lebanon's efforts in hosting and assisting those refugees.

3. Against the backdrop of the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and heightened tensions elsewhere in Lebanon, stability and quiet continued to prevail along the Blue Line and in the UNIFIL area of operations. The Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces continued to uphold the cessation of hostilities and their commitment to resolution 1701 (2006). There was no substantive progress, however, towards the implementation of the respective outstanding obligations of the parties under that resolution.

4. There was an increase in violent incidents across the Lebanese-Syrian border. Since 1 March, and as of 12 June, three Lebanese nationals and one Syrian child were killed by cross-border fire by Syrian army forces and armed members of the opposition, which injured at least six others and caused material damage. There were four air strikes by Syrian Government helicopters over Lebanese territory and



at least one incursion by land. The Lebanese Armed Forces reported continued smuggling of weapons across the Lebanese-Syrian border. Efforts to release the nine remaining pilgrims abducted in the Syrian Arab Republic on 22 May 2012 continue.

5. The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to serve as a background to events inside Lebanon. An intensification of the battle for the Syrian town of Qusayr on 19 May led to a new, sustained round of violence in Tripoli between the residents of a predominantly Sunni neighbourhood and those of an adjacent Alawite area, resulting in the highest number of casualties yet. On 26 May, following a speech in which Hizbullah acknowledged the movement's role in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic, two rockets struck the mainly Shia southern suburbs of Beirut, causing four casualties.

6. The influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon continues to rise at an alarming rate. As at 14 June, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that over 500,000 Syrian refugees were receiving or had sought United Nations assistance in Lebanon. This compares to 27,000 a year ago.

7. Following the resignation of Prime Minister Najib Mikati and his cabinet on 22 March, President Sleiman, on 6 April, appointed Tammam Salam as Prime Minister designate, with the broad support of political parties. As the parties were unable to agree on a basis for elections in Parliament, the President approved the suspension of the application of the election law on 12 April to enable the parties to continue consultations on proposals for a new draft law until 19 May. In the absence of agreement on a new law, on 31 May Parliament voted to extend its mandate until 20 November 2014, thereby postponing the elections scheduled for June. Prime Minister Mikati and members of his Government remain in office in a caretaker capacity while the Prime Minister designate continues consultations with all parties to form a new Government.

## **II. Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)**

### **A. Situation in the UNIFIL area of operations**

8. The situation in the UNIFIL area of operations remained generally calm during the reporting period. A few instances of heightened tension along the Blue Line were defused successfully through the parties' continued use of UNIFIL liaison and coordination arrangements. The parties also continued to work closely with UNIFIL to further strengthen security arrangements along the Blue Line. Due to ongoing security challenges in other parts of Lebanon, the Lebanese Armed Forces temporarily redeployed additional troops outside the UNIFIL area of operations, while maintaining close cooperation with UNIFIL and periodically reinforcing its presence in the UNIFIL area of operations, as needed. The presence of Syrian refugees in the area south of the Litani River continued to increase, with 16,899 people registered or awaiting registration by UNHCR as of 10 June.

9. Violations of Lebanese airspace by the Israel Defense Forces continued, with almost daily overflights by unmanned aerial vehicles and fixed-wing aircraft, including fighter jets. During the period from 3 to 5 May alone, UNIFIL counted 49 Israeli fighter jets violating Lebanese airspace, and from 27 to 29 May, there were intensified Israeli overflights, mostly by unmanned aerial vehicles. UNIFIL protested

all the air violations to the Israel Defense Forces, calling upon the authorities to cease them immediately. The Government of Lebanon also protested the violations, while the Government of Israel continued claiming that the overflights were necessary security measures.

10. The Israel Defense Forces continued its occupation of the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line in violation of resolution 1701 (2006). As laid out in my previous reports over the last seven years, UNIFIL has sought to facilitate the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the area. A response from Israel is still pending on the most recent UNIFIL proposal, of June 2011, regarding security arrangements for northern Ghajar, to which the Lebanese Armed Forces responded positively in July 2011.

11. In April 2013, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL of Israel's plans to reinforce the physical security infrastructure around Ghajar, including the northern part, intended, *inter alia*, to deter alleged smuggling activities from Lebanon. UNIFIL shared the technical details of the planned works with the Lebanese Armed Forces, which rejected it as a serious violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and voiced concern that the work could lead to an escalation of tensions, while expressing its readiness to cooperate with UNIFIL to prevent incidents, including any smuggling activities. UNIFIL conveyed this to the Israel Defense Forces, adding its own concerns regarding any potential escalation along the Blue Line and reiterating the position of the United Nations that the Israel Defense Forces must withdraw from all areas north of the Blue Line. The matter was discussed at the tripartite meeting of 8 May at which the Israel Defense Forces indicated that it would review its plans for the works in northern Ghajar. UNIFIL is following up on the issue with both parties, with a view to preventing tensions and incidents along the Blue Line.

12. UNIFIL completed its investigations into the rocket-launching incidents of 19 and 21 November 2012, as well as the 17 December 2012 explosion in Tayr Harfa, described in my previous report (S/2013/120). UNIFIL shared the results of these investigations with the parties. With regard to the incident of 19 November 2012, the Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL that they had discovered and dismantled two 107 millimetre rockets in the area between Mazraat Islamiye and Darjhat (Sector East). While UNIFIL confirmed that the rockets had been found 3.68 kilometres north of the Blue Line, it could not establish when the firing of the rockets had been attempted or why the initiation system had not worked. With regard to the incident of 21 November 2012, when an explosion had been heard in the vicinity of Al Mansurah (north of the Litani River), UNIFIL did not find any impact site in its area of operations. The Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL that the launching site was located north of the Litani River, outside the UNIFIL area of operations, and did not approve the Force's request to visit the site on that basis.

13. With regard to the explosion in Tayr Harfa (Sector West) on 17 December, UNIFIL found that eyewitness accounts, the material damage caused and the metallic ordnance fragments collected at the site all pointed to the detonation of a large quantity of explosives. UNIFIL was unable to determine the cause of the explosion definitively, however, as the site had been disturbed before UNIFIL and Lebanese Armed Forces investigation teams could access it, leaving the possibility that evidence had been lost. The UNIFIL request to excavate the explosion site was not accepted by the Lebanese Armed Forces.

14. In accordance with resolution 1701 (2006), it is the primary responsibility of the Lebanese Armed Forces to establish, between the Blue Line and the Litani River, an area free of armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL. In this regard, the discovery and dismantling of rockets by the Lebanese Armed Forces is an important contribution to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), including the maintenance of the cessation of hostilities. At the same time, it is imperative that UNIFIL is afforded full and immediate access to sites of suspected explosions or other incidents and that it is supported in the conduct of its investigations in order to verify if any violation of resolution 1701 (2006) had occurred and to determine the source and nature of any violations and to identify preventive measures for the future.

15. During the reporting period, UNIFIL observed an increase in the number of ground violations of the Blue Line committed by shepherds or farmers, which occurred on an almost daily basis. Most of these violations were inadvertent and occurred mainly in the Shab'a Farms area. UNIFIL protested the violations to the Lebanese Armed Forces and recalled that it is the primary responsibility of Lebanese authorities to ensure full respect for the Blue Line in its entirety.

16. On 1 May, near Ras Naqoura (Sector West), an Israeli civilian crossed the technical fence into Lebanon and was apprehended by a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol. Following questioning by the Lebanese Armed Forces, the man was voluntarily repatriated to Israel on 5 May under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, with the support of UNIFIL. In a separate incident, on 6 April, UNIFIL observed one Israeli civilian, who had climbed the T-wall along the Blue Line in Kafr Kela (Sector East), shouting at Lebanese Armed Forces personnel and civilians on the other side. UNIFIL protested the incident to the Israel Defense Forces.

17. Due to multiple security responsibilities elsewhere in Lebanon, in March the Lebanese Armed Forces temporarily redeployed additional troops from the UNIFIL area of operations to the vicinities of Sidon and Nabatiyeh, just north of the Litani River. This brought the total strength of the Lebanese Armed Forces presence in the UNIFIL area of operations to approximately two brigades, which were reorganized along the general operational boundaries of UNIFIL's two sectors. The Lebanese Armed Forces Command reassured UNIFIL that it would return units of the Lebanese Armed Forces to the UNIFIL area of operations should the security situation warrant. In line with that commitment, the Lebanese Armed Forces temporarily reinforced its presence by quickly deploying two companies to the area in advance of and during the Palestinian commemoration day on 15 May.

18. Despite the decreased physical presence of the Lebanese Armed Forces in the UNIFIL area of operations, both Forces continued their daily coordinated operational activities, co-locating checkpoints, including seven along the Litani River, and coordinating patrolling and joint training exercises. UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces continued to carry out joint counter-rocket launching operations, which were increased in the aftermath of the reported air strikes in the Syrian Arab Republic on 3 and 5 May and the firing of rockets in south Beirut on 26 May, as well as during the Palestinian commemorations on 30 March, 15 May and 5 June. The Lebanese Armed Forces established a permanent observation post near the Wazzani River to prevent violations of the Blue Line that have been prevalent in the past, particularly during the tourist season. UNIFIL continued to carry out regular helicopter patrols in its area of operations.

19. UNIFIL generally enjoyed full freedom of movement throughout its area of operations. However, on several occasions during the reporting period, UNIFIL encountered situations wherein civilians displayed antagonistic or aggressive behaviour and impeded the freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel. On 8 March, in Ghassaniyah, outside the UNIFIL area of operations, two UNIFIL vehicles travelling from Sidon to United Nations position 7-1 (Sector East) were stopped by civilians who forcibly seized UNIFIL equipment and personal belongings, including electronic and data storage devices. The stolen items are still missing. On another occasion, on 24 March near Yatar (Sector West), a group of civilians stopped a UNIFIL patrol asking it to leave the area and to return only if accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces. The civilians broke into the UNIFIL vehicles and seized electronic military and personal equipment, which has not yet been returned. Most recently, on 5 May, near Tibnin (Sector West), a UNIFIL patrol was stopped by four civilians who blocked the road with their motorcycles and objected to the patrol's presence in the area without the accompaniment of the Lebanese Armed Forces. When one civilian tried to force open the door of a UNIFIL patrol vehicle, the patrol forced its way through the roadblock and left the area. UNIFIL protested the incidents to the Lebanese Armed Forces, requesting that they be investigated and the illegally seized items recovered.

20. In addition, there have been instances when UNIFIL patrols, including some conducted along with the Lebanese Armed Forces, were prevented from proceeding by individuals either claiming to be acting on behalf of municipal authorities or stating that the road was private property. These incidents occurred in the Sector West area near Bmaryamir, Rshaf, Majda Zun and Tayr Harfa. UNIFIL protested all the incidents to the Lebanese Armed Forces, which subsequently informed UNIFIL that the concerned areas were indeed private property. In addition, there were two incidents near Ramyah (Sector West) in which individuals made forcible attempts to remove temporary road closures established by UNIFIL demining teams as a safety measure during its demining activities. There were several stone-throwing incidents against UNIFIL patrols, which, in two cases, caused minor damage to UNIFIL vehicles.

21. These incidents notwithstanding, the relations between the local population and UNIFIL remained positive. Through its regular liaison activities with local communities, UNIFIL sought to build confidence with the population within its area of operations. For example, at the Wazzani plateau, UNIFIL addressed local community concerns about the damage caused to fields along paths used by heavy military vehicles. UNIFIL continued to provide a range of community services, including medical, dental, veterinary and educational assistance. During the period, UNIFIL also completed several quick-impact projects and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, aimed at strengthening cooperation to build local capacity and social development, with a special focus on youth and women. In this regard, UNIFIL introduced on-the-job training for students and teachers and coordinated with a wide range of civilian actors in planning and organizing joint outreach activities.

22. UNIFIL continued to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in taking steps towards the establishment, between the Blue Line and the Litani River, of an area free of any unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons. Israeli authorities repeated their claims that Hizbullah had been building up its military presence inside populated areas in southern Lebanon and that unauthorized weapons were being transferred

into the UNIFIL area of operations. In coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, UNIFIL remains determined to act with all means available, within its mandate and the rules of engagement, to address cases where specific information is received regarding the illegal presence of armed personnel or weapons within its area of operations. UNIFIL does not, however, proactively search for weapons in the south. UNIFIL is not authorized to enter private property unless it possesses credible evidence of a violation of resolution 1701 (2006), including an imminent threat of hostile activity emanating from that specific location. To date, UNIFIL has neither been provided with, nor has found, evidence of the unauthorized transfer of arms into its area of operations. The Lebanese Armed Forces command continued to state that it would act immediately to stop any illegal activity in contravention of resolution 1701 (2006) and relevant Government decisions.

23. During the reporting period, aside from hunting weapons, UNIFIL observed no unauthorized armed personnel or weapons inside its area of operations. However, UNIFIL noted an increase in the number of individuals carrying hunting weapons in its area of operations, as compared to the previous period. Most such instances were observed in the areas of Blida and Meiss Ej Jebel (Sector East). The largest group included 27 individuals carrying 24 hunting rifles and a carbine on 7 April in the vicinity of Blida. In each instance, UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces.

24. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to carry out its dual mandate of conducting maritime interdiction operations in the area of maritime operations and training Lebanese navy personnel. Since my previous report, as of 17 June, the Lebanese navy and customs officials had inspected 391 vessels in order to verify that there were no unauthorized arms or related materiel on board. The Maritime Task Force and Lebanese naval forces conducted 42 training exercises on land and 151 at sea. Lebanese navy personnel continued to develop their capabilities through the conduct of nine on-the-job training exercises in maritime interdiction operations. There were some operational limitations to combined activities owing to the lack of adequate Lebanese navy vessels.

25. There were a number of incidents along the line of buoys. UNIFIL observed Israeli navy units dropping 16 depth charges and firing three flares, in addition to warning shots on 11 occasions, along the line of buoys, reportedly to ward off Lebanese fishing boats in the vicinity. UNIFIL has no mandate to monitor the buoy line, which the Government of Israel installed unilaterally and which the Government of Lebanon does not recognize.

## **B. Security and liaison arrangements**

26. UNIFIL continued to carry out its liaison and coordination with both parties in a positive and constructive atmosphere and along the lines set out in my previous reports. The parties repeatedly demonstrated their readiness to engage in UNIFIL efforts to address points of contention and decrease tensions. Daily interaction and liaison activities between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces continued at their established high and effective level. UNIFIL also maintained effective liaison and coordination with the Israel Defense Forces. No progress was made towards the establishment of a UNIFIL office in Tel Aviv.

27. The tripartite forum continued to convene regularly with full and active participation of the parties, effectively addressing emerging operational issues

relevant to maintaining the cessation of hostilities. The forum remains the most significant stabilizing factor within the framework of resolution 1701 (2006), serving to build confidence between the parties and defuse tension in potential flashpoints, as well as providing a platform through which UNIFIL can facilitate practical arrangements on the ground between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces. For example, a tripartite meeting on 8 May addressed the issue of Israel's planned works to reinforce the security infrastructure around Ghajar, with a view to averting any escalation of tensions. Other issues addressed in tripartite discussions included violations of resolution 1701 (2006), including of the Blue Line and Lebanese airspace, the results of UNIFIL investigations into incidents and restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel in its area of operations.

28. Progress in the visible marking of the Blue Line continued. During the reporting period, the Israel Defense Forces proposed new Blue Line points in addition to those originally listed for the marking of the Blue Line in its entirety. The Lebanese Armed Forces agreed to 49 of these new points proposed for marking. Hence, since my last report, the parties have agreed to mark a total of 54 additional points. As at 13 June, out of the new total of 522 Blue Line points to be marked, the parties have agreed to mark 302. The Force's demining teams have cleared access to 245 points to date, 207 of which have been measured. Some 184 Blue Line markers have been constructed and 156 verified by both parties. UNIFIL also continued separate discussions with the parties on addressing the issue of the points deemed problematic or contentious by the parties.

29. As mentioned in my previous reports, UNIFIL engaged with the Israel Defense Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces in bilateral consultations, upon their request, to explore ways to address questions of maritime security between the two countries. Informal consultations were held on this basis and, while a gap between their respective positions remains, both parties displayed a positive approach and interest in achieving progress on the issue of maritime security. UNIFIL is ready to facilitate further discussion and implement possible arrangements as may be agreed by the parties.

30. The efforts of the Force to increase the capability of the Lebanese Armed Forces through the strategic dialogue continued. Further to the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL's finalization of a plan for the development of the Lebanese Armed Forces in the UNIFIL area of operations in February 2013, UNIFIL briefed representatives of troop-contributing countries and other Member States to promote the plan. The strategic dialogue is a separate but integral component of the Lebanese Armed Forces capabilities development plan. UNIFIL also continued to explore with the Lebanese Armed Forces the establishment of a coordination mechanism for donor support to the strategic dialogue plan.

### **C. Disarming armed groups**

31. Resolution 1701 (2006) calls for the full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, as well as of resolution 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), which require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the Government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the Government of Lebanon.

32. The maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups outside the control of the Lebanese State, in violation of resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006), continues to restrict the State's ability to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory. Hizbullah acknowledges publicly that since 2006 it has continued to maintain a substantial military capacity separate from that of the Lebanese State, which it claims serves as a deterrent against potential aggression from Israel. While no meetings of the National Dialogue were held during the reporting period, President Sleiman has publicly restated support for the approach with regard to national defence and the control and use of Hizbullah's arms contained in the national defence strategy paper he presented as a basis for discussion in the National Dialogue in September 2012.

33. The proliferation of arms outside the control of the State continues to threaten stability. In Tripoli there were six fatalities as a result of a new cycle of violence between the residents of the predominantly Sunni neighbourhood of Bab al-Tabbaneh and the neighbouring Alawite area of Jebel Mohsen in March. A further sustained period of fighting, which began on 19 May, caused at least 36 fatalities, including two members of the Lebanese Armed Forces deployed to contain the violence, and injured over 200 people, including army personnel. Despite a pause in the fighting, other incidents of shooting and grenade throwing in the city caused a further four deaths and injured others. On 28 May, three soldiers were killed in an attack on a checkpoint in the Beqa'a town of Aarsal by unknown gunmen. On 3 June, a Sunni sheikh survived an assassination attempt in Sidon. On 23 and 24 June, armed clashes in Sidon between supporters of a Salafi cleric and the Lebanese Armed Forces left at least 16 soldiers dead and over 50 others wounded. I condemned this and other attacks on the Lebanese Armed Forces.

34. There has been no progress on the dismantling of military bases maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) and Fatah al-Intifada. In 2006, it was decided in the National Dialogue that these bases should be dismantled. The existence of these bases continues to compromise Lebanese sovereignty and impede the ability of the State to monitor and control effectively parts of the Lebanese-Syrian border.

35. During the reporting period, there was a noticeable increase in tension and in the number of security incidents in the Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon. Clashes broke out in Ein el Hilweh on at least three occasions between members of the Jund el Sham and Fatah factions, leaving four persons dead and injuring at least 20 others. At least two of the soldiers killed in the context of the violence in Sidon on 23 June were attacked at checkpoints of the Lebanese Armed Forces at the entrances to Ein el Hilweh.

#### **D. Arms embargo and border control**

36. In its resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council decided that all States should prevent the sale or the supply of arms and related materiel to entities or individuals in Lebanon by their nationals, or from their territories, or using their flag vessels or aircraft. In the same resolution the Council also called upon the Government of Lebanon to secure its borders and other entry points so as to prevent the entry of arms and related materiel into Lebanon without its consent.

37. Israeli Government representatives have consistently alleged that there are significant, ongoing arms transfers to Hizbullah across the Lebanese-Syrian border. The United Nations takes these allegations seriously, but it is not in a position to independently verify them. Senior Israeli officials stated publicly during the reporting period that Israel would take steps to prevent the transfer of advanced weapons from the Syrian Arab Republic to Hizbullah. In a letter dated 5 May (A/67/859-S/2013/266), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon protested intensifying incursions by the Israeli air force over Lebanon in violation of Lebanese airspace, coinciding with reported air strikes on targets in Damascus on 3 and 5 May. In a letter of the same date in connection with the reported air strikes (S/2013/267), the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic denied any movement of weapons out of Syrian territory. While the United Nations has no details concerning the event, and is not in a position to independently verify it, I noted the reports with grave concern and urged all sides to exercise maximum calm and restraint, to act with a sense of responsibility to prevent an escalation and to respect the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region and adhere to all relevant Security Council resolutions. On 9 May, Hizbullah asserted that it was willing to receive new weapons from the Syrian Arab Republic.

38. There was an increase in incidents of cross-border shelling and rocket fire from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon during the reporting period. As at 12 June, projectiles fired by Syrian army forces and by armed members of the opposition from within the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanese territory killed at least three Lebanese citizens and injured at least six others. Other Lebanese casualties have been reported. Syrian army fighter jets and helicopters were involved in at least six reported violations of Lebanese airspace. Syrian army helicopters fired missiles at the Lebanese town of Arsal on five occasions, causing at least one casualty and material damage. On 19 June, President Sleiman protested these violations in a letter for transmission to the President of the Security Council (S/2013/370, annex). The Lebanese Armed Forces stated that their units in that area had taken the defensive measures necessary to react immediately to any further violation. On 2 May, Syrian army forces reportedly entered the Lebanese village of Ras Baalbek causing some material damage. On 23 May, members of the Lebanese security forces came under fire from within the Syrian Arab Republic. President Sleiman convened a meeting of the security cabinet on 14 April to address the continued cross-border attacks and to seek support from the League of Arab States. President Sleiman issued repeated calls on the parties in the Syrian Arab Republic to respect Lebanon's sovereignty and avoid military acts against Lebanese border areas.

39. In public statements, elements in Lebanon have become more open about involvement in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic. On 25 May, Hizbullah acknowledged and defended the movement's engagement in the Syrian military confrontation. There were frequent media reports of funerals of members of Hizbullah killed in the fighting in and around the Syrian town of Qusayr. On 22 April, two prominent Salafi sheikhs urged followers to engage in jihad in the Syrian Arab Republic and credible reports indicate that Lebanese Sunni elements are involved in the fighting there alongside the armed opposition. President Sleiman has repeatedly voiced concern about Lebanese involvement in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, calling on all Lebanese to abide by the policy of disassociation and the principles of the Baabda Declaration, to which Lebanon's leaders agreed in June 2012. In an interview published on 20 June in the Lebanese media, President Sleiman

called on Hizbullah fighters to return to Lebanon. On 26 May, I expressed deep concern about the acknowledged increased participation by Hizbullah in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic and reiterated to all Lebanese leaders the paramount importance of preventing a dangerous spillover of the conflict into Lebanon.

40. The Lebanese Armed Forces continued their efforts to sustain and extend the authority of the State along Lebanon's northern and eastern borders, including by checking smuggling of weapons and inhibiting the movement of fighters. My Special Coordinator convened a meeting of Ambassadors from donor countries on 25 April as part of the long-standing effort to coordinate assistance to the Lebanese security forces with border management. My Special Coordinator also continued to work with donors and the Lebanese Armed Forces to finalize and mobilize support for the \$1.6 billion plan to develop the capacity and capability of the Lebanese Armed Forces, for which the Government has committed itself to cover funding over the first year. On 15 May, the Lebanese Armed Forces hosted a preparatory meeting for the launch of the plan, which was shared with donor countries.

41. The influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon has reached a dramatic level. As of 14 June, half a million Syrians had approached UNHCR, 80 per cent of whom were women and children. It is projected that the number of those seeking assistance will reach 1 million by the end of 2013. The assistance effort continues to grow, although UNHCR and its partners have had to reduce levels of assistance for a certain period because of a shortage of funds and the rapidly rising numbers. The regional response plan for the previous six months has been 88 per cent funded. The new regional response plan, launched on 7 June, requires over \$1.6 billion to address refugee needs in Lebanon for the next six-month period, including a request for \$450 million from the Lebanese Government for its own response. Host communities increasingly complain of the pressure on local resources and Lebanese officials express concern as to possible economic, health and security implications. Nonetheless, Lebanon continued to meet its humanitarian obligations to host those seeking refuge. President Sleiman has described even the current burden as unsustainable and called for an international conference on the refugee issue.

42. Increasing tension was observed within Palestinian refugee camps as a result of security incidents (although they have been successfully contained), overcrowding, competition for employment, rising prices and other factors resulting from the increasing number of refugees displaced from the Syrian Arab Republic. The total number of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic who have approached the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Lebanon is now 61,500. This figure is projected to reach 80,000 by the end of 2013.

## **E. Landmines and cluster bombs**

43. The Lebanon Mine Action Centre, a unit of the Lebanese Armed Forces, is the national authority for mine action in Lebanon with responsibility for the management of all humanitarian clearance and mine action data. The United Nations Mine Action Support Team is a programme of the United Nations Mine Action Service implemented in support of UNIFIL demining activities along the Blue Line through the execution of training, validation and quality assurance monitoring for UNIFIL contingents.

44. Eight manual mine-clearance teams, three military explosives ordnance disposal teams and one mechanical clearance team from UNIFIL are currently validated and deployed in the area of operations. From 1 March to 16 June, UNIFIL cleared over 4,750 m<sup>2</sup> of hazardous land to provide access to Blue Line points. In addition, UNIFIL found and destroyed 177 anti-personnel mines. The United Nations Mine Action Service conducted training for UNIFIL military and civilian personnel and quality assurance visits to operational sites and organized demonstrations. On the occasion of Mine Awareness Day, on 4 April, UNIFIL and the United Nations Mine Action Service organized events for visitors, including 74 students from local schools, to highlight the global problem of landmines and explosive remnants of war, and the United Nations response.

#### **F. Delineation of border**

45. No progress was made towards delineating and demarcating the Syrian-Lebanese border, including in areas where it is uncertain or disputed, as called for in Security Council resolutions 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006). Cross-border violence, incursions and air strikes in border areas as a result of the Syrian conflict once again highlights the importance of the delineation and demarcation of the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic as soon as practicable.

46. There has also been no progress on the issue of the Shab'a Farms area. There has still been no reaction to the provisional definition of that area contained in my report of 30 October 2007 on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2007/641) from either Israel or the Syrian Arab Republic.

### **III. Security and safety of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

47. UNIFIL continued to cooperate closely with the Lebanese authorities to ensure the safety and security of all Force personnel, in addition to applying its own risk mitigation measures, continuously reviewing its security plans and carrying out safety awareness training for its personnel.

48. UNIFIL continued to observe proceedings in the Lebanese Military Court against suspects involved in cases of serious attacks, actual or planned, against UNIFIL peacekeepers, the latest of which took place in 2011. Permanent court hearings concerning the case of an intended attack against UNIFIL in 2011 and an attack against UNIFIL in 2008 were adjourned to June and September 2013, respectively, in order to call for additional witnesses. There were no developments in the appeal court hearings concerning sentences handed down in October 2012 in the case of another intended attack against UNIFIL in 2008.

### **IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

49. As at 17 June, the total military strength of UNIFIL was 10,681, including 377 (3.5 per cent) women. The civilian component consisted of 332 international and 649 national staff, including 98 and 164 women, respectively. UNIFIL is

supported by 51 United Nations Truce Supervision Organization military observers of the Observer Group Lebanon, including three women.

50. Further to my previous report, Spain completed its planned reduction in the number of its troops in the Force to 558 in May. On 3 April 2013, Indonesia deployed a new corvette as part of the Maritime Task Force, which brought the Task Force's strength back to the required level of eight ships (two frigates, three corvettes and three fast patrol boats) and two helicopters.

## V. Observations

51. Amid the ongoing crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and the increasing volatility in some parts of Lebanon, the continued quiet along the Blue Line and stability in the UNIFIL area of operations are noteworthy. I commend both parties for demonstrating strong commitment to safeguarding the cessation of hostilities and for keeping a steady focus on maintaining calm through their continued cooperation with UNIFIL and their effective use of the liaison and coordination arrangements.

52. I remain concerned at the lack of progress towards achieving a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution to the conflict, as envisaged in resolution 1701 (2006). I continue to believe that it is in the mutual interests of the parties to work towards achieving those objectives. My Special Coordinator and UNIFIL have encouraged the parties to focus again on the goal of a permanent ceasefire, and in this regard I once again take this opportunity to urge both parties to reflect positively on ways forward. I further urge all concerned to avoid escalatory steps that could endanger the present calm and to make the fullest use of the liaison and coordination arrangements existing with UNIFIL, and the good offices of my Special Coordinator, to address developments of concern.

53. Major obligations under the resolution remain outstanding and require action by both parties. The imperative remains for continued efforts to ensure that the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River is free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL. The Lebanese authorities have the primary responsibility in this regard. In this context, I also wish to reiterate the need to ensure that both parties cooperate fully with UNIFIL investigations into possible violations of resolution 1701 (2006).

54. I am concerned that violations of Lebanese airspace by Israel continue unabated, and in some instances have intensified, in violation of Lebanese sovereignty and resolution 1701 (2006). These almost daily overflights run counter to the Force's objectives and its efforts to reduce tensions, and have a negative impact on the credibility of both the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL. I call again on the Government of Israel to cease all overflights of Lebanese territory and territorial waters.

55. The continued occupation by the Israel Defense Forces of the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line also constitutes a continuing violation of resolution 1701 (2006). I urge the Government of Israel to withdraw its forces from the area, in accordance with resolution 1701 (2006), without further delay. UNIFIL stands ready to facilitate such a withdrawal.

56. I am encouraged by the continued progress in visibly marking the Blue Line, which contributes to preventing further inadvertent ground violations. The

commitment of the parties to continue working with UNIFIL, including on contentious or problematic points, will be vital to the completion of this process. I also recall the need for both parties to prevent violations of the Blue Line, and to refrain from taking any measures close to the Blue Line that could lead to misunderstandings or be perceived by the other side as provocative. Both sides, notwithstanding their respective reservations, have undertaken to respect the Blue Line, as identified by the United Nations, in its entirety.

57. There continue to be incidents impeding UNIFIL's freedom of movement as well as instances of aggressive behaviour towards UNIFIL personnel. Although marginal in number compared to the overall level of UNIFIL's activities, some of these incidents have the potential to compromise UNIFIL's effectiveness in executing its tasks under resolution 1701 (2006). It is the primary responsibility of the Lebanese authorities to ensure that UNIFIL can operate unhindered in its area of operations.

58. The impact of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic on the security and stability of Lebanon is more and more apparent. The security tensions, political uncertainty and humanitarian concerns are increasingly interrelated. I am deeply concerned by the marked increase during the reporting period in incidents across the Lebanese-Syrian borders, and by the additional fatalities, injuries and material damage caused. Further lack of progress in delineating and demarcating the border is no justification for such serious violations of Lebanese territorial integrity. I deplore these incidents and I call upon the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and all of those fighting in that country to cease violations of the border and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006).

59. I note also with deep concern, new developments with regard to the involvement of Lebanese citizens in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic, including Hizbullah's acknowledged participation in and commitment to such fighting, threats by external actors to bring their fight to Lebanon in response to Hizbullah's involvement and calls from inside Lebanon to engage in jihad in the Syrian Arab Republic. The implications of these developments for Lebanon's stability, and indeed for the region, are serious. I have consistently opposed the transfer of arms and fighters from outside the Syrian Arab Republic to either side inside the country. I urge all concerned parties in Lebanon to step back from involvement in the conflict. The Baabda Declaration, which was agreed upon by all of the country's political leaders last year under the leadership of President Sleiman, sets out principles with regard to neutrality and disassociation, which are of enduring importance in this regard, and I call upon Lebanon's leaders to recommit themselves to them. I commend President Sleiman's continued strong stance in this regard.

60. The unacceptable violence in parts of Lebanon, particularly in Tripoli, during the reporting period highlights the need for renewed unity and determination across the political spectrum to prevent a slide into conflict. Continued broad political support is needed for the security and judicial authorities to combat impunity in respect of acts of violence. The intensity of the violence in Tripoli during this reporting period also underscores the dangerous prevalence of weapons outside the authority of the State. In this regard, I call on all Member States to uphold their obligation, under resolution 1701 (2006), to prevent the sale or supply of arms or related materiel to entities or individuals in Lebanon.

61. The maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups outside the control of the State continues to pose a threat to Lebanese sovereignty and stability, and contradicts the country's obligations under resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). President Sleiman's reiteration of the vision set out in his proposed national defence strategy with regard to the arms of Hizbullah was an important reminder of the way forward, which, I remain convinced, can only be through the National Dialogue. I urge Lebanon's leaders to again consider recourse to the dialogue forum to address this and other critical issues relating to the country's stability and security. Such a resumption of dialogue would be an effective demonstration of continued national unity in the face of multiple security challenges. In this context, I also reiterate my call for the implementation of earlier decisions of the National Dialogue, specifically those relating to the disarmament of the non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of the military bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) and Fatah al-Intifada.

62. When they voted on 31 May to extend the Parliament's mandate, members of the Lebanese Parliament cited the tense security situation. It is regrettable that agreement on a new election law did not prove possible. It is imperative for confidence and stability in Lebanon, and for sustaining the long-standing national democratic tradition central to it, that the political parties resume efforts as soon as possible to agree on arrangements for parliamentary elections. A revived sense of urgency and commitment will be needed. The United Nations will continue to do all it can to assist with preparations for elections, including through technical and other support. I am also concerned by any attempts to undermine or boycott Lebanese national institutions at a time when the Lebanese State needs to be strengthened, not weakened.

63. It is self-evident that, to address the multiple challenges it faces, Lebanon requires an effective Government. The initial unanimity among political parties with regard to the selection of Prime Minister designate Tammam Salam sent a very positive signal to the people of Lebanon and to the international community. I encourage Lebanon's leaders to continue to engage with him to finalize the formation of a Government without further delay. In the meantime, it is important that the President and his caretaker Ministers are supported as they seek to address the most pressing issues arising, particularly with regard to security and humanitarian matters.

64. One context in which the early formation of a Government is critical is the humanitarian crisis. Lebanon and its people deserve the highest praise for the way in which they have maintained an open door to those fleeing the violence in the Syrian Arab Republic over the past two years. The numbers continue to rise steadily, with economic, social and security implications that require ongoing Government attention, including planning and decisions involving a multiplicity of agencies. I encourage the Lebanese authorities to ensure that fully empowered institutional structures are in place to carry out the effective planning, delivery and coordination responsibilities. With regard to assistance, although international donors have thus far been generous in response to the United Nations appeals for Lebanon, there is now a need for assistance on an unprecedented scale, both to meet the needs of the refugees and of host communities, and to assist the Lebanese authorities who face extraordinary fiscal and structural challenges as a result of the refugee influx. United Nations and Government officials have worked closely together on the appeal for Lebanon contained in the new regional response plan launched on 7 June. I thank those in the international community who have helped in bringing this about.

I call upon all Governments and funds which are able to provide assistance in response to the revised appeal to do so generously and without delay, and I look particularly to regional donors to assist where possible. Lebanon faces a truly massive challenge and the Lebanese people, and the refugees, deserve every possible support. I encourage the international community to consider President Sleiman's proposal for a conference on the Syrian refugees in Lebanon to address the urgent support needed to alleviate the pressures of the crisis for Lebanon.

65. I commend the Lebanese Armed Forces for its steadfast commitment and cooperation with UNIFIL, especially during the periods of heightened tensions and given its multiple security responsibilities. The Lebanese Armed Forces, in partnership with UNIFIL, plays a key role in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). Building the capacity of the Lebanese Armed Forces is essential. Supporting the development of the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces, on land and at sea, is a prerequisite for its gradual assumption of effective and sustainable security control of the UNIFIL area of operations and Lebanese territorial waters, and a key element to support moves towards a permanent ceasefire. In this context, I welcome the progress made in the process of formalization of a regular strategic dialogue mechanism between the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL. I am grateful to those countries that are helping to equip and train the Lebanese Armed Forces, including the navy.

66. Throughout the present report, as in previous ones, reference also has been made to the crucial role played by the Lebanese Armed Forces in responding to new security challenges, whether on Lebanon's eastern and northern borders or internally, which threaten stability as a central concern of the resolution. Over the present reporting period the Lebanese Armed Forces have had to respond to further testing challenges. It is vital that Lebanon's leaders across the political spectrum and Lebanese in all communities continue to offer every possible support to the Lebanese Armed Forces as a truly national institution which is a central pillar of the country's stability.

67. The international community can play its part, alongside the Government of Lebanon, in helping to strengthen the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces, which are increasingly stretched. I congratulate the Armed Forces for the work that went into its wider capabilities development plan, of which the Strategic Dialogue plan forms a separate but integral component. The development plan has been endorsed by the authorities in Lebanon at the highest level, and the Government has committed funds to it. It has now been shared with those Member States that have assisted the Lebanese Armed Forces. I urge the international community to increase its support to the strengthening of the Lebanese Armed Forces and to provide further assistance in response to the new plan, either directly or via the mechanism of the Strategic Dialogue, as appropriate. The United Nations will continue to offer every possible support for these important initiatives in coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces and donors.

68. It is important that leaders in the Palestinian camps continue to work together and with the Lebanese authorities to maintain order. The need to improve the living conditions of Palestine refugees in Lebanon, without prejudice to the resolution of the refugee question and the context of a comprehensive peace settlement, is ever more urgent as the Palestine refugee camps are increasingly overcrowded as a result of the growing numbers of Palestine refugees displaced from the Syrian Arab Republic.

I encourage donors to be forthcoming in support of UNRWA, including to enable it to effectively assist displaced Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic.

69. Regrettably no progress has been made with regard to the Shab'a Farms area, in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 1701 (2006). I call, once again, on the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel to submit their responses to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area that I provided in my report of 30 October 2007 (S/2007/641).

70. Oil and gas exploration opportunities in the eastern Mediterranean remained significant interests of both Lebanon and Israel during the reporting period. The launch on 2 May of the offshore oil and gas concession period by Lebanon was a significant step towards the country's eventual ability to reap the benefits of its natural resources. In this context, I encourage both countries to continue efforts to address the delimitation of their respective maritime exclusive economic zones and the exploration and exploitation of their natural resources in a manner that does not give rise to tensions. The United Nations remains ready to assist in this matter should both parties so request.

71. Lebanon's resilience in the face of the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has been severely tested over the four months covered in the present report. In the circumstances of increased tensions described herein, keeping Lebanon safe from conflict and sustaining the present fragile calm across the Blue Line are in themselves demanding objectives. If they are to be met, the united support of the international community will be required. For the sake of regional and international peace and security it is vital that this unity be sustained in the coming period, that appropriate attention and support be devoted to addressing the challenges identified in this report and that the Governments of Lebanon and Israel and all other stakeholders remain committed to the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) during this period of uncertainty. Longer-term security and stability call for an end to conflict in the region, including progress towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

72. I am grateful to all countries contributing troops and equipment to UNIFIL. I also wish to express my appreciation to the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander and the civilian and military peacekeeping personnel, in addition to the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the staff of his office, all of whom continue to play a vital role in helping to promote stability along the Blue Line and in Lebanon.



## Security Council

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### **Letter dated 26 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith a report on the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Rwanda in April 2013 (see annex).

The assessment report was prepared under my responsibility, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Eugène-Richard Gasana  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 26 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

**Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Rwanda (April 2013)**

**Introduction**

In April 2013, the Security Council held 29 meetings, mainly relating to conflict-specific situations, but also including thematic debates on such matters as conflict prevention in Africa, sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict peacebuilding. Among those meetings, the Council held two open debates, seven briefings, 14 closed consultations, two private meetings and a meeting of troop- and police-contributing countries. Furthermore, the President of the Council convened an informal interactive dialogue on 26 April. Three resolutions were also adopted.

The central thematic session of April 2013 was the briefing on 15 April on "Peace and security in Africa: prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes". At that meeting, presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Rwanda, Louise Mushikiwabo, the participants examined how the Council could develop a culture of conflict prevention and considered its day-to-day management of conflicts.

Three resolutions were adopted in April, all on 25 April. The Council adopted a presidential statement on 15 April. In total, eight press statements were issued. Members also agreed on one "elements to the press", delivered by the President of the Council on 18 April.

In preparing the present monthly assessment, Rwanda took note of the note by the President of the Council of 12 December 2012 (S/2012/922), in which the members of the Council reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing the efficiency and transparency of the Council's work. Specifically, they recognized the usefulness of the monthly assessments in providing as much information as possible on the main aspects of the work of the Council during that month.

**Africa**

**Central African Republic**

Council members met in closed consultations on 9 April to discuss the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of BINUCA, Margaret Vogt, provided a briefing to Council members on the situation in the Central African Republic via videoconference from Bangui.

The Special Representative said that the political situation remained highly volatile following the unconstitutional change of power in March 2013. On 31 March, a transitional Government had been created, with the leader of the Séléka rebel coalition and self-proclaimed President, Michel Djotodia, also retaining the minister of defence portfolio. The unconstitutional change in power in Bangui had been unanimously condemned.

Following those developments, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) had convened an extraordinary summit of Heads of State in N'Djamena on 3 April 2013, at which leaders had agreed to put in place a national transitional council that would have the task of electing three leaders: the Head of State, the Vice-President and the President of the National Transitional Council. The National Transitional Council would be given between 18 and 24 months to conduct presidential, legislative and local elections.

The Special Representative commended the Heads of State for putting the Libreville Agreements of 11 January 2013 back on track, saying that the Agreements were essential to restoring legality in the country.

The security situation in the Central African Republic had deteriorated following the seizure of power by the Séléka coalition, characterized by widespread looting, banditry and carjacking resulting from the inability of the new authorities in Bangui to exert control at the political and security levels. The humanitarian situation was likewise deteriorating. Human rights violations were a concern, she said, noting that targeted killings were occurring, as were arbitrary arrests and detentions and rapes. Reports of recruitment of child soldiers by various Séléka factions were of particular concern.

In statements following that briefing, Council members welcomed the outcome of the ECCAS summit on 3 April, reiterating their support for the efforts of the African Union and the United Nations, through BINUCA, to resolve the crisis in the Central African Republic. They condemned the violations of human rights in the country, including sexual violence and the recruitment of child soldiers. In addition, members expressed concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation and called upon the Séléka leaders to guarantee unhindered access to affected persons.

Some Council members expressed the view that the current instability in the country should not impede continuing efforts to combat the Lord's Resistance Army in the region. In condemning the unconstitutional change in power, some members reiterated their support for the African Union and ECCAS on the issue, including by saying that the new political situation in Bangui should not be accepted as a fait accompli. The importance of strengthening cooperation with regional and subregional organizations was emphasized, as was the fact that such cooperation should be consistent and coherent.

On 29 April, following his recent visit to the Central African Republic, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, provided a briefing to Council members in consultations. The security situation was deteriorating and a climate of impunity prevailed, he said. The humanitarian situation was becoming increasingly dire and limited progress was being made to address that trend.

Following the Under-Secretary-General's assessment of the security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic, Council members expressed concern at and condemned the continuing violations of human rights in the country. They commended the efforts of ECCAS to address the situation, including the convening of a summit for Heads of State on 18 April in N'Djamena. The decision at that summit to increase the number of personnel of the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic in order to address the deteriorating security situation was welcomed. Members reaffirmed that the Libreville Agreements remained the basis for finding a lasting and peaceful solution.

Following the consultations, the Council issued a press statement in which its members expressed strong concern at the worsening humanitarian and security situation and the weakening of the Central African institutions. They called upon Séléka leaders to ensure that all Séléka armed groups abstained from all violent action and were regrouped without delay into cantonment sites, in accordance with the Libreville Agreements, and called upon all parties to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access. They also expressed serious concern at reports of human rights violations and abuses, emphasizing that those responsible must be held accountable.

### **Côte d'Ivoire**

On 16 April, the Council received a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Members then met in closed consultations to discuss UNOCI and receive a briefing from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire, Gert Rosenthal (Guatemala).

The Assistant Secretary-General said that Côte d'Ivoire had made progress since the post-electoral crisis and had moved into a new phase of peacebuilding. Nevertheless, the country continued to face threats to its peace and stability, including from those involved in networks affiliated with the former regime. The security situation in the border area with Liberia had improved significantly, although considerable challenges remained. The quadripartite meeting held on 5 April in Monrovia, which had brought together the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, in addition to UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia, had been a positive development in enhancing cross-border cooperation.

Ahead of the local elections in Côte d'Ivoire that were to be held on 21 April, UNOCI was providing limited support to the Independent Electoral Commission. The former ruling party had chosen not to participate in the elections, efforts to encourage it to occupy its legitimate political space notwithstanding. Concerning the important issue of reconciliation and social cohesion, progress remained slow. It was necessary for the country to bring to justice the perpetrators of serious crimes, regardless of their political affiliation, in order to end the cycle of impunity and to build a culture of accountability.

The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire said that stabilizing the security situation was a priority on which the consolidation of progress depended. The Government was taking measures in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, including in training and integrating former combatants. National reconciliation was an obligation for his country and the President was committed to combating impunity. If the drawdown of UNOCI went ahead, it should be accompanied by more resources, he said, requesting the deployment of an unmanned aerial system to observe the border area with Liberia.

In consultations, the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire summarized the main findings of the Group of Experts contained in its final report (S/2013/228), saying that there had been several violations of the arms embargo during the reporting period and that illegal mining of diamonds had continued.

In their statements, Council members agreed that violations of the sanctions regime might lead to serious security threats in Côte d'Ivoire. Some members welcomed the progress made. Looking ahead to the legislative elections set for 2015, some members said that the emphasis should be on ensuring that they were inclusive, fair and transparent. Several members called for the smooth disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, in addition to further security sector reform. Some members expressed views on the possible use of an unmanned aerial system in the country.

Council members discussed the gradual reduction of the authorized military strength of UNOCI recommended by the Secretary-General and whether the Council should look into further reductions.

On 25 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2101 (2013), in which it extended the sanctions measures in place on Côte d'Ivoire by one year, until 30 April 2014, including a notification requirement for the supply of non-lethal equipment to Côte d'Ivoire, a Committee pre-approval requirement for supply of lethal weapons to Côte d'Ivoire and a ban on the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel to non-State actors in Côte d'Ivoire. It also extended the mandate of the Group of Experts until 30 April 2014.

No explanations of vote were made following the adoption of the resolution, although the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, who spoke following the adoption, emphasized his country's commitment to cooperating fully with the United Nations, including the Group of Experts. His delegation hoped that the measures in the resolution would strengthen stability and possibly lead to the partial or complete lifting of the sanctions regime.

#### **Peace and security in Africa (Guinea)**

On 25 April, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided a briefing to Council members in consultations on the situation in Guinea under "Any other business". He said that the situation in Guinea had become tense in recent months owing to the continued disagreement between the Government and the opposition over the preparations for legislative elections. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the Office for West Africa, Said Djinnit, had been appointed by the Secretary-General as the international facilitator to join the two national facilitators who represented the Government and the opposition.

Tensions had risen in Guinea after the opposition had denounced a presidential decree of 13 April in which legislative elections had been set for 30 June 2013. The opposition had said that the decision had been made unilaterally, without the input of other political parties. An agreement had been brokered on 23 April, in which all parties involved had declared that they would refrain from violent demonstration and committed themselves to resolving outstanding issues through peaceful means. On 25 April, the day of the briefing, one person had been killed and several wounded in clashes between security forces and demonstrators.

Following the briefing, Council members issued a press statement in which they welcomed the signing of the declaration on 23 April and the commitment of the President of Guinea, Alpha Condé, to implementing measures to guarantee peaceful, free and fair elections. They welcomed the engagement of the Special

Representative of the Secretary-General in the dialogue process and stressed that there was a need for political dialogue.

### **Mali**

On 3 April, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided a briefing to the Council on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189). He said that one of the highest priorities of the Secretary-General was ensuring that the United Nations helped Mali to resolve the complex crisis that it faced. The most significant development in the political process remained the adoption of a transitional road map. That road map highlighted two priority tasks for the transitional Government: the restoration of territorial integrity and the organization of free and fair elections. While humanitarian access had improved in some parts of Mali, the situation remained volatile, in particular in Timbuktu and Gao.

He briefly discussed the two options proposed by the Secretary-General in his report. Under both options, the United Nations would maintain a strong focus on the political process, including elections and national reconciliation. Under the first option, the Organization would strengthen the United Nations Office in Mali while enhancing the operational capability of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to conduct stabilization and counter-terrorism operations in parallel. Under the second option, the Organization would deploy a multidimensional integrated stabilization mission, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, with a parallel force conducting combat and counter-terrorism operations.

The Permanent Representative of Mali paid tribute to the French soldiers of Operation Serval and to the soldiers deployed under AFISMA. He voiced support for the second of the two options presented by the Secretary-General. The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, speaking on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States, recommended that the Council should authorize the transformation of AFISMA into a United Nations stabilization operation with a robust mandate.

Following the briefing, Council members held closed consultations during which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, updated members on the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, in which he had requested the deployment of a United Nations stabilization mission to Mali.

Council members expressed concern at the lack of political progress in Mali and called for an enduring and sustainable solution to the current crisis. They underlined that there was a need for broader dialogue and national reconciliation between political actors and within and across communities, in particular with armed groups that had disassociated themselves from terrorism and were willing to engage in dialogue. Members broadly favoured the second option put forward by the Secretary-General. Members queried the modalities and contours of the parallel force and its possible mandate. They said that the mandate and the proposed size of the United Nations stabilization mission required further discussion, emphasizing that there must be clarity around the mandate assigned to both forces.

On 25 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2100 (2013), by which it established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), with MINUSMA assuming responsibility for the discharge of the mandated tasks of the United Nations Office in Mali as from the date of adoption of the resolution. It decided that authority should be transferred from AFISMA to MINUSMA on 1 July 2013 and that AFISMA military and police personnel appropriate to United Nations standards should be included in MINUSMA from that date. It mandated that the phased deployment of MINUSMA would be subject to a further review by the Council within 60 days of the date of adoption of the resolution of the security situation in the Mission's envisaged area of responsibility. One Council member made an explanation of vote, saying that he had voted in favour of the resolution taking into account a relevant request by the Malian national authorities supported by relevant regional organizations.

MINUSMA was mandated to stabilize key population centres in support of the transitional authorities of Mali and authorized to use all means necessary to implement certain tasks of its mandate. It was also mandated to support the transitional authorities of Mali in the implementation of the transitional road map, including with regard to national political dialogue and the electoral process. The mandate also included responsibilities to protect civilians and promote and protect human rights.

The Council also authorized French troops to use all means necessary to intervene in support of elements of MINUSMA when under imminent and serious threat upon request of the Secretary-General.

### **Somalia**

On 25 April, the Council received a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on Somalia, including on the United Nations technical assessment mission in the country and its findings (see S/2013/239). He said that the Government of Somalia had continued the implementation of its policy of stabilization and peacebuilding and was reaching out beyond the capital in an effort to realize its vision for a federal State, although its approach had not been accepted by all in the country.

In March and April, there had been several reminders of the fragile security situation. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was reaching its operational limits in terms of holding and expanding areas under its control. The anticipated withdrawal of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces would add to the resource strain.

Turning to the Secretary-General's vision of the new special political mission, he affirmed that the new mission would support peacebuilding and State-building in the country. Its core role would be as an enabler, helping to create and to galvanize the political and strategic environment in which stabilization and peacebuilding could proceed. The new mission's areas of focus would include providing good offices, supporting reconciliation efforts and assisting with the mediation of challenges associated with constitutional review and federalism. It would also assist in building national capacity in the security sector and in promoting human rights.

Given the security environment in which it would operate, the mission might be expensive and would require strong support, in particular from the Council. The

essential roles played by the African Union and AMISOM in Somalia were acknowledged, as was the important continuing cooperation with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

The Permanent Representative of Somalia commended what he termed the "clear" and "factual" assessment report, saying that AMISOM had done a good job and that it was time to ensure that the Somali national security forces were able to assume responsibility for eliminating Al-Shabaab, thereby providing stability and security for the country. Somalia had gone through many stages, he said, expressing the hope that the implementation of the recommendations in the assessment report would be realized through the full support of the Council.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia also participated in the briefing. He commended the Council on the adoption of resolution 2093 (2013) and for fielding the technical assessment mission. Efforts to combat Al-Shabaab were far from over. He commended the work of AMISOM, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, saying that the partnership with those regional organizations was crucial to helping the Somali people. Somali national ownership was key. It was critical to support the Somali national security forces so that they could play their role in maintaining peace and security throughout the country.

On the question of the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from regions of Somalia, he discussed the importance of burden-sharing and the effective use of available resources. Ethiopia was ready to discuss the issues further, he said.

During the closed consultations that followed the briefing, Council members welcomed the report of the technical assessment mission, expressing appreciation for the work undertaken by the assessment team. Most agreed that the report represented a new opportunity for United Nations engagement in Somalia and to capitalize on recent gains made. Some members argued that there needed to be a clear division of labour within the new United Nations mission so as to avoid confusion and duplication. That there was a need for the mission to develop strategic partnerships with relevant regional and subregional organizations was also emphasized.

During the consultations, the Under-Secretary-General provided further details on the assessment report, saying that it was inclusive and had been produced in full cooperation with the African Union. On the issue of the integration of the new mission and its timing, analysis was being undertaken by various teams and recommendations would be made in due course.

The resolution establishing the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia was unanimously adopted as resolution 2102 (2013) on 2 May.

#### **Sudan (Darfur)**

On 29 April, the Council received a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). He reported that the situation in Darfur was troubling and that there could be no military solution to the crisis. Continuing combined efforts of the Council, the African Union and the international community were required in order to persuade the parties involved to reach a fully inclusive political settlement. The Permanent Representative of the Sudan participated in the

meeting and said that, while tribal conflicts in the region had displaced many persons, the situation had been contained.

Following the briefing, Council members met in consultations. They condemned the attack of 19 April on UNAMID forces, which had killed one peacekeeper and injured two others, and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. Some members expressed concern about the capacity of some UNAMID units to conduct their operations and to protect internally displaced persons. Some members also drew attention to the continued restrictions placed on UNAMID, urging all parties not to hinder the Mission's work or that of the humanitarian actors in the region. They also called for the expeditious processing of outstanding visa applications for UNAMID personnel. They requested the President of the Council to convey to the Permanent Representative of the Sudan the concerns of the Council regarding the continued imposition of movement restrictions on UNAMID personnel. That was done later that day.

Council members expressed their support for the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and welcomed the signing on 6 April of the Doha Document by the Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan. Several called upon rebel groups that had not yet signed the Doha Document to do so and to join the negotiation process. The International Donor Conference for Reconstruction and Development in Darfur, held in Doha on 7 and 8 April, was welcomed by some members. The need for donors to swiftly deliver on their pledges was emphasized.

#### **Sudan and South Sudan**

On 11 April, in accordance with resolution 2046 (2012), Council members held one of their biweekly consultations on the Sudan and South Sudan. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations provided a briefing on the progress in negotiations between the two States and on the ambush of United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) peacekeepers in Jonglei State, South Sudan, on 9 April.

Concerning oil production, he confirmed that South Sudan had in March instructed oil companies to resume oil production and that oil exports should resume by the end of May 2013. On the humanitarian situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, the Government of the Sudan had allowed the World Food Programme to undertake a rapid needs assessment, with Sudanese humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations, in locations controlled by the Government in Blue Nile State.

The Sudan had responded favourably to an invitation for its President, Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir, to meet his South Sudanese counterpart, Salva Kiir, in Juba on 12 April. As to the attack on UNMISS peacekeepers on 9 April, UNMISS had immediately dispatched troop reinforcements following the ambush and a board of inquiry would be set up to investigate the deadly incident.

In statements following the briefing, Council members condemned the attack of 9 April on UNMISS personnel and the killing of the peacekeepers. Members called upon South Sudan to investigate the incident in order to bring the perpetrators to justice. On the implementation of the agreements of 27 September between the two sides, members welcomed the progress made, notably the withdrawal of troops from the buffer zone and the resumption of oil production.

Some members expressed concern about the delay by the Government of the Sudan in beginning negotiations with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), although the imminent start of the negotiations between the two sides was welcomed. Council members raised the issue of humanitarian access in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, welcoming the partial access given to the World Food Programme, although several members also lamented the lack of access to the areas controlled by SPLM-N and expressed the hope that progress would be made on the issue. Some members called for the lifting of unilateral economic sanctions against the Sudan and for debt relief.

On 11 April, Council members held consultations on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), during which they received a briefing from the Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNISFA, Major General Yohannes Tesfamariam. Abyei had remained relatively calm, he said, but the situation was tense, fragile and unpredictable. The engagement of UNISFA had prevented the collapse of the peace process. The lack of police services and government systems had engendered criminal activities in the region, which were escalating.

Concerning the implementation of the matrix signed by the two sides on 12 March, the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism had undertaken aerial missions to verify troop withdrawals, as agreed. Both parties were accusing the other of violating agreements to demilitarize the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone. He urged the Council to endorse the proposal for additional UNISFA troops to provide protection for the Mechanism and to enable it to address continuing verification challenges, given that UNISFA was stretched to capacity.

Council members largely supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to increase the military component of UNISFA in order to facilitate the Mission's mandate to support the Mechanism. They expressed concern about the intercommunal violence in Abyei and the delay in establishing the temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area. Members urged the Presidents of the Sudan and South Sudan to address and solve the issue when they met in Juba later in April. Concerning the final status of Abyei, divergent views were expressed, with some members saying that the proposal of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel of 21 September, accepted by the Peace and Security Council, provided an equitable solution, and others that a solution necessitated dialogue between both parties on the issue and that external actors could not impose a durable solution.

On 29 April, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, provided a briefing to Council members in consultations on the Sudan and South Sudan. He said that members of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, established by the Sudan and South Sudan to discuss political and security issues between the two countries, had reaffirmed their commitment to continuing their cooperation in the implementation of the agreements of 27 September 2012. In addition, agreement had been reached to open eight border crossings between the countries. On the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, limited verification activities were being undertaken for logistical reasons. Concerning the negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-N, direct talks had begun on 24 April, facilitated by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. There had been agreement to meet again in May.

In their statements following the briefing, Council members welcomed the improved relations between the Sudan and South Sudan and underlined the need for continuing cooperation towards the implementation of the agreements of 27 September. Members welcomed the planned opening of the eight border-crossing corridors between the two countries, terming it a positive development, while noting that much work remained to be done. The historic visit of the President of the Sudan to South Sudan earlier in April was welcomed by members, as was the two leaders' commitment to the agreements of 27 September. Some expressed concern at the delay in agreeing on the implementation of the interim administrative institutions in Abyei, including the Abyei Area Administration, the Abyei Area Council and the Abyei Police Service, and called upon the two parties to make progress in resolving the final status of Abyei. Some members called for debt relief for the Sudan and South Sudan, in addition to the lifting of unilateral economic sanctions on the Sudan.

Concerning the humanitarian situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, several members welcomed the launch of negotiations between the Sudan and SPLM-N, although it was noted that the talks had ended without progress. Several members called for an immediate ceasefire to allow humanitarian access. Council members condemned the attack by the Sudanese Revolutionary Front in the Sudan the day following the beginning of negotiations between the Sudan and SPLM-N.

#### **Western Sahara**

On 11 April, the Council held a private meeting with countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and received a briefing by the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, Izumi Nakamitsu, after which it adopted a communiqué.

On 22 April, Council members held consultations on MINURSO. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and Head of MINURSO, Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber, and the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, gave a briefing. The former said that MINURSO military observers were undertaking a significant number of ground patrols each month and that cooperation with the parties was good. The situation in Western Sahara, regional changes witnessed in recent years notwithstanding, remained frozen, the Personal Envoy said. Confidence-building measures, notably family visits and seminars implemented by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, had been well received and the number of family visits had increased substantially.

Regarding the issue of challenges to MINURSO, the issue of flags had been resolved and a pragmatic solution was being sought to the issue of license plates, the Special Representative said.

The Personal Envoy emphasized that, given the unstable security situation in the Sahel, a solution to the Western Sahara issue was urgent. The parties remained firmly entrenched in their positions. As Personal Envoy to the Secretary-General, he worked to send the message to the parties that negotiations should be carried out in the spirit of give and take. He would continue the new approach consisting of undertaking shuttle diplomacy, whereby he would consult privately each of the parties and neighbouring States in an attempt to make progress on elements of a

possible compromise or consensual solution. He informed members about his visit to the region from 18 March to 3 April and from 8 to 11 April.

In their remarks following the two briefings, most Council members affirmed that a mutually acceptable political solution was the only lasting solution to the conflict. Several other members voiced support for the autonomy plan put forward by Morocco. A number of members called for improved relations between Morocco and Algeria in order to help to create a good atmosphere for the negotiations. The work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in facilitating family visits between the Tindouf refugee camp and Western Sahara was highlighted and welcomed by members. A number of members referred to the situation in the broader Sahel region and its impact on the conflict.

Some Council members raised the issue of human rights, expressing concern regarding reports of alleged violations in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps in Algeria. All delegations noted the reforms undertaken by Morocco in the field of human rights, notably the establishment of the National Council of Human Rights, including its commissions in Laayoune and Dakhla, and its cooperation with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Some members expressed concern about the possible politicization of the issue of human rights in Western Sahara and others about the situation of the population in the Tindouf camps in Algeria, requesting a refugee registration of that population. On the renewal of the mandate of MINURSO, some members expressed their support for the additional military observers and police requested by the Secretary-General.

On 25 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2099 (2013), by which it extended the mandate of MINURSO until 30 April 2014.

## **Middle East**

### **Middle East (Syrian Arab Republic)**

On 18 April, the Council held a briefing on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Council received briefings from the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura; and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui. Following the briefings, the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Turkey also made statements.

The Under-Secretary-General said that humanitarian organizations in the Syrian Arab Republic were facing enormous and growing constraints in aiding millions of Syrians affected by the crisis. Aid agencies were facing growing bureaucratic obstacles inhibiting their ability to respond, such as problems relating to authorizations by the Government for convoys, non-governmental organizations and visas. Throughout the country, humanitarian convoys were regularly attacked or shot at, with their personnel intimidated or kidnapped. The Council needed to consider alternative forms of aid delivery, including cross-border operations. If some routes were unsafe, it behooved the parties to identify alternative routes, including across international borders. She urged the Council to request the parties

to ensure the safe and unimpeded access of aid organizations to those in need in all areas of the Syrian Arab Republic and to support cross-border operations.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said that, without an end to the fighting, by the end of 2013 almost half of the population of the Syrian Arab Republic might be in need of humanitarian assistance. If current trends continued, the number of Syrian refugees might reach 3.5 million by the end of 2013, with 6.5 million people inside the Syrian Arab Republic potentially needing humanitarian assistance.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict said that, since her previous briefing, widespread patterns of sexual violations had continued. Both government forces and opposition fighters were abducting women and girls to extract information. The systemic practice of sexual violence in government detention centres, as part of an organized policy against women, men and even children, was appalling. She strongly urged the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Bashar Al-Assad, to ensure that all persons in government custody were treated humanely. The Government had shared with her, in a letter, details of some incidents of kidnapping, sexual violence, torture and other serious human rights violations carried out by opposition fighters. She strongly urged the leadership of the Free Syrian Army and other armed groups to halt such violations and to issue clear directives to commanders throughout their chains of command to prevent sexual violence. Allegations of human trafficking of young women and girls were also on the rise. Expressing deep concern at sexual violence against women and girls in the Syrian Arab Republic and recalling the conclusion of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic that numerous cases of sexual violence could amount to crimes against humanity, she called upon the Syrian authorities to investigate all allegations of sexual violence and to hold each and every perpetrator accountable. It was time for specific action, she said, mentioning her intention to visit the Syrian Arab Republic as soon as possible.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict said that children were one of the groups that had suffered the most in the Syrian conflict, with 3 million already affected. Children had been murdered, tortured and subjected to sexual violence and millions traumatized by the horrors that they had witnessed. The use of heavy weapons in civilian-held areas should be avoided.

In consultations following the briefings, Council members expressed their concern at the deterioration of the humanitarian situation resulting from the Syrian crisis. Members underlined that there was an urgent need to remove obstacles impeding the provision of humanitarian assistance, including bureaucratic obstacles. Some members reiterated the importance of granting cross-border humanitarian access, while others recalled that any humanitarian activities should be carried out in accordance with the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance. Members also reiterated their concern at the increasing number of refugees, which gravely affected the socioeconomic situation, stability and security of the countries neighbouring the Syrian Arab Republic. Members underscored that a political solution to the crisis was needed, with some criticizing those who were frustrating that process. Several members highlighted their concerns about the indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas by the Syrian authorities using Scud missiles. Responsibility for the conflict

was also attributed to opposition forces, including with regard to engaging children in military conflicts. Members welcomed the launch by the Secretary-General of an investigation into the alleged use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. They condemned those who violated international humanitarian law and human rights, emphasizing that there was a need to bring perpetrators to justice. Some denounced what they termed "a systematic policy of terror pursued by the Syrian regime" in that regard. Others denounced the armed opposition for its broadened terrorist tactics against civilians.

In consultations on 19 April, members received a briefing from the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi. He said that Syrians were living in constant fear for their personal security, suggesting that a solution to the crisis lay in the Council's hands.

Reflecting on the past two years of international efforts and on the eight months that he had been in his role, he said that he had sought to concentrate his efforts on talking to the parties to the conflict inside and outside the Syrian Arab Republic, and to their backers, and to encourage the Council to unite to effectively support the final communiqué of the Action Group for Syria of 30 June 2012 (Geneva communiqué and action plan). He had opted for a Syrian-led plan to implement the Geneva communiqué, although the international community's stand-off had prevented a solution from being reached. He mentioned the resolution adopted by the Arab League on 26 March 2013, in which the Syrian opposition coalition had been invited to represent the Syrian Arab Republic at the Arab League summit on 26 and 27 March.

The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic was becoming more complex by the day: the Government was not ready to listen and the opposition was not united around a credible and constructive political programme. Organizations affiliated with Al-Qaida, such as Jebhat al-Nusra li-Ahl al-Sham, continued to grow in strength in the Syrian Arab Republic, with foreign volunteers fighting in their ranks. At the same time, foreign presence on the side of the Government was a reality and Hizbullah appeared to be militarily present in the Syrian Arab Republic and engaged alongside government forces. He stressed that there was a need for the opposition to begin working with others on a political process for the Syrian Arab Republic. In that regard, the initiative of Moaz al-Khatib in February should be further developed and not discarded. On the side of the regime, he underlined that there was an equally urgent need to abandon the dream of a military victory, stressing that no war could be brought to an end through a vague dialogue with mainly the supporters of one's own side.

In their comments following the briefing, some members said that the Council needed to avoid attributing blame for the impasse and instead focus on how to resolve the Syrian crisis based on the Geneva communiqué, noting that the Council had not responded to the Joint Special Representative's request in January to follow up on his suggestions for building on the communiqué. Some Council members reaffirmed that political dialogue was the only means through which the crisis could be resolved and that military solutions would further complicate the situation. Some members expressed the view that the decision of the Arab League to formally grant the opposition representation would only complicate the issue and not facilitate a political settlement.

A number of Council members reiterated that all credible allegations of use of chemical weapons should be investigated, noting that the Syrian regime was blocking access. One member accused some members of doing all that they could to ensure that an investigation of the particular incident in Khan al-Asal reported by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was not conducted.

Many Council members voiced support for the proposal for a new conference between the Syrian parties so as to give a new impetus to the peace process and reach a much-needed political settlement of the conflict, through a political transition and on the basis of the Geneva communiqué, thus ending the plight of the Syrian people.

#### **Middle East (including the Palestinian question)**

On 24 April, the Council held its quarterly open debate on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided a briefing to the Council, including on the stalled Middle East peace process, saying that the tragedy in the Syrian Arab Republic made it even more vital for all parties to work collectively to preserve stability in the Middle East. The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to deteriorate. He called for swift action to address the humanitarian situation, both inside and outside the Syrian Arab Republic, adding that Jordan and Lebanon in particular needed support given their proximity to the crisis.

There was currently increased risk throughout the Middle East. Rapid action was necessary not only to address the impact of the Syrian crisis, but also to make progress in advancing the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, had visited the region in March, affording an important opportunity for both parties to make serious efforts to further peace.

On the Middle East peace process, the United Nations remained committed to working with the parties involved, but much would depend on their political willingness to create conditions conducive to resuming the political process. The financial viability of the Palestinian Authority remained at risk, he said, reiterating the call for it to receive more financial support. The past month had seen an increase in Palestinian casualties, mostly as a result of new clashes with Israeli security forces during Palestinian demonstrations that had grown violent.

On the occasion of Palestinian Prisoners Day (17 April), some 3,000 prisoners had gone on hunger strike for the day. Demonstrations had been held in the main West Bank cities, resulting in 11 Palestinians being injured by Israeli security forces. During the ensuing clashes, the Israeli security forces had killed two Palestinian teenagers and injured two others at a checkpoint near Tulkarem after they had allegedly thrown Molotov cocktails at the checkpoint.

He reiterated that demonstrations must remain non-violent, while urging the Israeli security forces to show the utmost restraint and to ensure the right of Palestinians to demonstrate peacefully and freely. He also expressed concern at the continued developments with regard to settlement activity. Such activity was in violation of international law and could further undermine Palestinians' confidence in the viability of the two-State solution.

In the same vein, he reiterated his strong condemnation of the firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel. Indiscriminate rocket firing was intended to sow fear and

cause civilian casualties and could trigger cycles of violence that were difficult to stop. He also called upon Israel to act with restraint, expressing concern about the impact of Israeli restrictions on the civilian population in Gaza.

He expressed concern that the spillover of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to be felt in Lebanon, in particular in north-eastern border areas. He deplored several incidents, including rocket attacks and airstrikes from the Syrian side. On the political situation, he noted the designation by the President of Lebanon, Michel Sleiman, of Tamam Salam as Prime Minister and urged Lebanese leaders to continue to engage positively to ensure the early formation of a Government and to respect the President's disassociation policy. He also conveyed the concerns of the Secretary-General about reports of Lebanese fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic, both for the regime and for the opposition, expressing the hope that the new Government would find ways to promote better compliance with the disassociation policy by all sides in Lebanon.

He also echoed Council members' call for swift progress to be made in ensuring a speedy agreement on the electoral law so that timely parliamentary elections could be held on a consensual basis within the legal and constitutional framework.

On the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and along the Blue Line, he said that it had remained generally calm, while adding that the President of Lebanon had twice in April publicly condemned Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace as breaches of resolution 1701 (2006). He reiterated the concern of the United Nations that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon should be fully respected by all parties.

Following the briefing, statements were made by the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine to the United Nations and the Permanent Representative of Israel. Both speakers welcomed the visit of the President of the United States to the region the previous month and expressed their views on the impediments to the peace process. Most Council members also welcomed that visit to the region, expressing the hope that the constructive talks would result in the parties returning to negotiations. Many members condemned the rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, urged Israel and Gaza to uphold the ceasefire between them and encouraged Israel to lift the blockade on Gaza and to halt its illegal settlement activities. Such actions would help to build mutual trust, some members said, and to resolve the humanitarian situation. Some members called for a resumption of the active involvement of the Quartet.

On the Syrian Arab Republic, several Council members expressed alarm at the possible use of chemical weapons in the conflict. Some members said that they were deeply concerned at the use of heavy weapons by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, calling for the Government to be held accountable for its actions. Others expressed concern at terrorist activities among opposition groups. All members, however, voiced concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, emphasizing that a negotiated political solution based on the Geneva communiqué was necessary to end the conflict.

On Lebanon, Council members expressed concern at the consequences of the Syrian crisis, reiterating their support for the dissociation policy of the President of Lebanon and for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. They

welcomed the appointment of Tamam Salam as Prime Minister of Lebanon, calling upon all parties to work towards the organization of parliamentary elections within the constitutional time frame.

More than 20 States Members of the United Nations participated in the open debate. Many welcomed United States efforts for progress towards peace in the Middle East. Several criticized the continuation of what they termed illegal Israeli policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory through the expansion of Israeli settlements and the building of the wall of separation. Some members said that the Council had been unable to live up to its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security with regard to the Palestinian question and the Syrian Arab Republic.

#### **Middle East (humanitarian situation in Jordan)**

The Council held a private meeting on 30 April at the request of the Permanent Representative of Jordan to discuss the humanitarian situation in the country resulting from the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. Jordan was invited to participate in that meeting. The Council issued a communiqué following the meeting, in accordance with its usual practice.

#### **Middle East (Yemen)**

On 4 April, Council members met in closed consultations on Yemen and received a briefing from the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, Jamal Benomar. The Special Adviser said that, on 18 March, the President of Yemen, Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, had launched the National Dialogue Conference, a significant milestone. The 565 delegates had diverse backgrounds, including women and young people and representatives of political parties and civil society. He praised the leadership of the President of Yemen in convening the event and continuing to implement the transition agreement, which called for a referendum and parliamentary and presidential elections by February 2014.

Addressing the grievances of southerners, which had accumulated for more than two decades, was a significant aspect of the Yemeni political transition. The Security Council's mission to Yemen in January 2013 and its presidential statement of 15 February 2013 (S/PRST/2013/3), in addition to close interaction with the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union, had yielded positive results in the country.

Council members welcomed the launch of the National Dialogue Conference on 18 March, saying that it afforded an historic opportunity for the Yemeni people, including women and young people, to come together to resolve grievances and to build trust, ensure that justice was served, strengthen human rights and contribute to national development and prosperity. Members acknowledged, however, that serious challenges remained in the transition, including addressing the grievances of southerners. Some members welcomed the visit of the President of Yemen to the southern port city of Aden in February as an indication of his commitment to resolving southerners' fundamental grievances. Some members also emphasized the importance of the territorial integrity of Yemen and national sovereignty. Members voiced concerns at the activities of Al-Qaida in the country.

## **Asia**

### **Myanmar**

On 16 April, Council members held closed consultations on Myanmar and received a briefing from the Special Adviser on Myanmar, Vijay Nambiar. It was the first time that the Special Adviser had given a briefing to members since 20 June 2012 and, since then, he had visited Myanmar five times, most recently from 21 to 25 March. In his briefing, he said that, while the continuing political reform policies implemented by the Government were resulting in the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions, political progress could be undermined if negative forces in the country were not controlled.

The parliament had established key rule of law and judicial institutions and there was increased transparency in parliamentary discussions on financial and budgetary questions. Concerning negative factors that might undermine the political progress, the violence in 2012 in Rakhine State had resulted in large numbers of internally displaced persons, most from the Rohingya community. It was critical for the Government to address the dire humanitarian situation in the camps before the arrival of the monsoon season. Regarding the tension between the Government and the Kachin Independence Organization, he was optimistic that a mutually acceptable political solution could be found.

Council members commended the Special Adviser on his work and welcomed his briefing. On the political progress made, members commended the work undertaken by the Government, with some encouraging the Government to continue to work with the opposition. Members urged the Government to address the growing tensions and violence between Muslim and Buddhist communities. They also expressed their concern at the humanitarian situation in the camps for internally displaced persons, as discussed during the briefing, and urged the international community to assist the Government with humanitarian relief.

Regarding the political situation in Kachin State, members commended the efforts made by both parties to negotiate a solution, while noting that concerns remained. Divergent views were expressed on the extent to which the international community should be involved in negotiations within Kachin State between the two sides. The Special Adviser said that the Government was actively addressing the issue of children being used in the military and that there was enhanced awareness of the issue, but that lack of access to non-State armed groups remained a constraint.

## **Thematic issues**

### **Peace and security in Africa**

On 15 April, the Council held a high-level briefing on "Peace and security in Africa: prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes". The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Rwanda, Louise Mushikiwabo. The Secretary-General participated in the meeting, as did the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, who represented the Chairperson of the African Union. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo was also in attendance.

As President of the Council, Ms. Mushikiwabo said that the briefing aimed at examining how the Council could move from a day-to-day management of conflicts to develop a culture of conflict prevention through skills, mechanisms and institutions that addressed the root causes of conflicts in Africa. The important role of the African Union in identifying the root causes of conflict in Africa was underscored, as were the roles of the institutions and mechanisms established to address those causes. It was necessary for the Council to strengthen its cooperation with the African Union and African subregional organizations.

The Secretary-General said that conflicts arose from poor governance, human rights abuses and grievances over unequal distribution of resources, wealth and power, rendering it necessary to tackle those issues. The Organization's efforts throughout Africa were benefiting from reinvigorated regional organizations, which were playing a stronger strategic role as key partners.

The Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union, said that Africa had made significant progress over the past decade. He underscored that Africa bore the primary responsibility for its own peace and development, remarking that it took the lead in its subregions in addressing and preventing conflicts.

Several members said that the root causes of conflict included a lack of good governance, economic, political and social marginalization, poverty and the lack of rule of law. Some members said that, while the immediate causes of conflict were sometimes simple to identify, the root causes were more complex and many rooted in the legacy of colonialism.

The Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2013/4) in which it recognized the importance of a comprehensive strategy comprising operational and structural measures for prevention of armed conflicts and encouraged the development of measures to address the root causes of conflicts in order to ensure sustainable peace. The Council also underlined the importance of partnership and cooperation between regional and subregional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

#### **Women and peace and security**

On 17 April, the Council held a high-level open debate on women and peace and security to discuss the report of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict (S/2013/149). The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Rwanda, Louise Mushikiwabo. The Secretary-General provided a briefing to the Council, as did the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Saran Keïta Diakit  made a statement on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

The Secretary-General said that the United Nations had to use all the tools at its disposal to address the negative trends associated with wartime rape. Such trends underscored the need to address sexual violence during ceasefire negotiations, peace processes and security sector reform.

The Special Representative discussed her recent visits to the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, describing sexual violence atrocities. She said that the Council must send an unequivocal message that sexual violence in conflict would not be tolerated and that the full force of

international order would be brought to bear to ensure accountability. She also emphasized the importance of prevention and responsibility.

Ms. Keïta Diakité said that effectively addressing the complexities of sexual violence in conflict required powerful and urgent leadership at all levels. Achieving sustainable peace and the elimination of sexual violence in conflict would continue to be impossible if the root causes of inequality were not addressed. There was a devastating link between the flow of arms and the perpetration of sexual abuse. She called upon States to uphold their commitments regarding women, peace and security in all disarmament processes.

Ms. Mushikiwabo noted that rape and sexual assault were key elements of genocide ideology used to punish, humiliate and dehumanize victims, their families and communities. She called upon the international community, non-governmental organizations, civil society, faith-based organizations and other non-State actors operating in affected areas to support the reporting and investigation of sexual crimes.

In addition to the Council members, dozens of delegations from the wider United Nations membership participated in the full-day meeting, totalling more than 60 speakers. Many delegations voiced support for the recommendation by the Secretary-General in his report to address sexual violence during peace negotiations, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.

### **Post-conflict peacebuilding**

On 25 April, the Council held a briefing on post-conflict peacebuilding to discuss the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (S/2013/63). The Permanent Representative of Bangladesh and former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Abulkalam Abdul Momen, provided a briefing to the Council, as did the current Chair of the Commission and Permanent Representative of Croatia, Ranko Vilić.

The former Chair of the Commission highlighted some of the Commission's country-specific engagement with the six countries on its agenda (Burundi, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone), including support for the launching of a national reconciliation strategy in Liberia, the successful conduct of elections in Sierra Leone and a new poverty reduction strategy in Burundi. Those achievements notwithstanding, the Commission's full potential remained unrealized and would remain so without further commitment by the membership.

The Chair of the Commission focused his comments on the interaction between the Council and the Commission, saying that there was a need for further elaboration and exchange of views on where the Commission's advice would be of most value to the Council and how the latter could best engage with the Commission.

Council members commended the work of the Commission and its current and former leadership. Several members said that, while there were commendable success stories, the Commission had not fully realized the mission that it had been assigned at the time of its establishment, pointing to the recent developments in the Central African Republic as an illustration of that. Several members recommended that the Commission should focus on national priorities, including economic